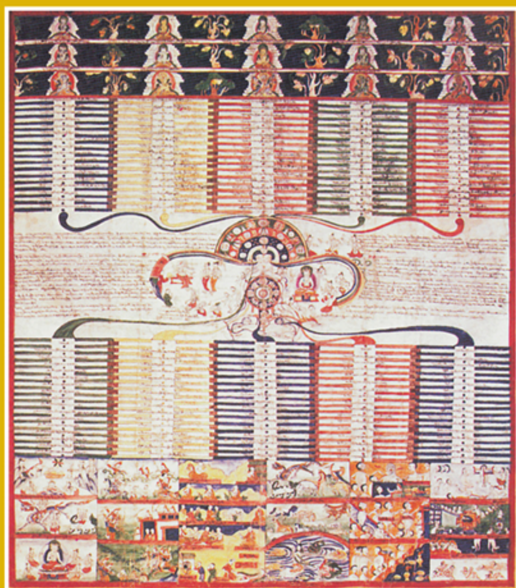
# *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen)*

A PHILOSOPHICAL AND MEDITATIVE TEACHING OF TIBETAN BUDDHISM

SECOND EDITION



BY

SAMTEN GYALTSEN KARMAY

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(rDzogs chen)

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## A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching of Tibetan Buddhism

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*To my son*
*'Od-zer Rab-dbang*

# CONTENTS

# PREFACE

The Great Perfection, in Tibetan rDzogs chen, is a philosophical and meditative teaching in Tibetan Buddhism. Its parallel in Chinese Buddhism is Ch'an, and Zen in the Japanese Buddhist tradition.

Western writers on Tibetan Buddhism have often viewed it as a survival of what is known as 'The Sudden Path', a form of the Ch'an school which was once known in Tibet in the eighth century A.D., but soon declined before the breakup of the Tibetan Empire in the mid-ninth century A.D. This view, however, is largely derived from the attitude of the Tibetan Buddhist orthodox schools who, without foundation, regarded rDzogs chen as a resurrection of the Ch'an whose practice according to the Tibetan historical tradition, was officially banned after the famous Sino-Indian Buddhist controversy that took place around 790 A.D. in Tibet.

In spite of this controversial view, rDzogs chen not only occupies the topmost position in the rNying ma pa tradition, but is also upheld by a number of eminent Buddhist teachers in the other schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Moreover, it is the heart of the Bon religious tradition although the Bonpo do not consider themselves as followers of the Buddha Śākyamuni.

As a distinctive Tibetan religious movement, rDzogs chen is the first among the various religious traditions to be formed in Tibet. Constituted itself in the ninth century A.D., it preceded all the later major Buddhist schools although it did not become an independent school as such. Its preponderance in the formation of Tibetan Buddhism which began in the eleventh century A.D. therefore cannot be disregarded if Tibetan Buddhism is to be understood properly in all its varying aspects.

Although studies in the Tibetan religious field have advanced much in recent years, the origin and historical development of rDzogs chen has remained little known. Only a few works on this tradition have been published, but they are based on sources mostly of late origin, from the fourteenth century A.D. downwards pertaining to a period when the scholastic development was well underway in Tibetan Buddhist history. Consequently, it was evident that to know something about its origin and early development, it was imperative to use earlier materials so as to ascertain from what period rDzogs chen constitutes itself as a distinctive religious and philosophical movement. For this, we have been fortunate enough to discover three ninth century documents from Central Asia which served as the basis of our research into the period with which we

are concerned. In order to pursue the development of rDzogs chen in the tenth and eleventh centuries A.D., we have also used contemporary native sources as well as a variety of later works that contain relevant information for elucidating our points.

The primary concern of our research was to find out the kind of ideas that gave impetus to the formation of rDzogs chen thought in the ninth century A.D. and the historical, social and religious circumstances in which it had its birth as well as its literary and historical development in the following tenth and eleventh centuries A.D. After these centuries, rDzogs chen came to be a subject of codification linked with the scholastic interpretation in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries A.D. just as in all the other schools of Tibetan Buddhism and the Bon tradition.

In connection with the development of rDzogs chen after the eleventh century, we have made a general survey of its many important aspects, such as its philosophical relation with other major Buddhist doctrines, its reflection in popular beliefs, its imprints on general Tibetan religious culture and above all its deep influence in the Eclectic Movement in later periods, especially in the nineteenth century.

Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique,
Paris, July 1986

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# ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| *BA* | *The Blue Annals* (See Roerich, G.N., Bibliography). |
| *BEFEO* | *Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-orient.* |
| *BK* | *Blon po bka' thang* by O-rgyan gling pa. |
| *BNy* | *Bya gtong snyan sgron* by dKon-mchog rgyal-mtshan, dPal-mang –. |
| *BS* | *Bon sgo gsal byed* by Tre-ston rGyal-mtshan-dpal (See Bonpo Sources). |
| *BT* | *Bod chen drug gi 'bel gtam* by Ngag-dbang chos-grags, mKhan-po –. |
| *BZh* | *sBa-bzhed* (See Stein 1961). |
| *Ch* | *Chos dang chos ma yin pa rnam par dbye ba'i rab tu byed pa* by dPal-'dzin, 'Bri-gung –. |
| *ChR* | *Chos 'byung rin po che'i gter mdzod* by rGyal-sras Thugs-mchog-rtsal. |
| *DNg* | *Deb ther sngon po* by gZhon-nu-dpal, 'Gos Lo-tsa-ba –. |
| *DR* | *sDom gsum rab dbye* by Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan, Sa-paṇ –. |
| *DS* | *bDe bar gshegs pa bstan pa'i gsal byed chos kyi 'byung gnas gsung rab rin po che'i mdzod* by Rin-chen-grub, Bu-ston –. |
| *GB* | *sGra sbyor bam po gnyis pa, T* Vol. 144, No. 5833. |
| *GCh* | *Gang ga'i chu rgyun* by Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho. |
| *GLZ* | *rGol ngan log rtog bzlog pa'i bstan bcos* by Ngag-gi dbang-po, Kun-mkhyen –. |
| *HYG* | *lHa dbang g. yu las rgyal ba* by 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje, bDud-'joms –. |
| *IOL* | India Office Library (Louis de la Vallée Poussin, *Catalogue of the Tibetan Manuscripts from Tun-huang in the India Office Library*, London 1962). |
| *JA* | *Journal Asiatique.* |
| *JRAS* | *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.* |
| *JT* | *'Jig rten gsum gyi bde skyid pad tshal 'byed pa'i nyin byed* by gDong-drug snyems-pa'i lang-tsho (*alias* Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho). |
| *K* | *bKa' 'gyur, The Tibetan Tripiṭaka*, Tokyo 1957. |
| *KC* | *dKon mchog 'grel* by Chos-kyi bzang-po, Rong-zom –. |
| *KG* | *Kun byed rgyal po, K* Vol. 9, No. 451 (Kaneko No. 1). |
| *KhG* | *mKhas pa'i dga' ston* by gTsug-lag phreng-ba, dPa'-bo –. |
| *KhT* | *Khu byug lta ba spyod pa'i 'khor lo, Bairo rgyud 'bum*, Vol. 5, No. 10(Ta). |
| *LB* | *Lung dang rig pa'i 'brug sgra* by Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan, Sog-zlog-pa –. |
| *LPDz* | *Legs bshad padma dkar po'i rdzing bu* by Padma rnam-rgyal, Zhe-chen rgyal-tshab –. |
| *LShG* | *Legs par bshad pa dri med gang ga'i chu rgyun* by bKra-shis rnam-rgyal, Klong-chen rab-'byams III –. |
| *MBT* | *Minor Buddhist Texts* (See Tucci 1956 and 1958). |
| *MNy* | *Me tog snying po* by Nyi-ma 'od-zer, Nyang-ral –. |
| *MPh* | *Me tog phreng ba* by Mi-pham rnam-rgyal, 'Ju –. |
| *MTG* | *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba'i 'grel ba* by Chos-kyi bzang-po, Rong-zom –. |
| *MTPh* | *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba, T* Vol. 83, No. 4726. |
| *MVy* | *Mahāvyutpatti*, edited by Sakaki, Kyoto 1916–26. |
| *NgD* | *Nges don 'brug sgra* by Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan, Sog-zlog-pa –. |
| *NGT* | *rGyud 'bum rtogs brjod* by 'Gyur-med tshe-dbang mchog-grub, dGe-rtse sprul-sku –. |
| *NyG* | *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*, Thimpu 1973. |
| *NyK* | *rNying rgyud dkar chag* by 'Jigs-med gling-pa. |
| *NyP* | *Nyi zla sprin gyi snang ba* by rDo-rje gzi-brjid (*alias* Klong-chen rab-'byams). |
| *PG* | *dPyod ldan mtha' dag dga' bar byed pa* Śākya mchog-ldan, gSer-mdog Paṇ-chen –. |
| *PK* | *Padma bka' thang* by O-rgyan gling-pa. |
| *PT* | Pelliot tibétain (Laou, M., *Inventaire des manuscrits de Touen-houang conservés à la Bibliothèque nationale*, Vol. I, Paris 1939 (Nos. 1–849); Vol. II, Paris 1950 (Nos. 850–1109)). |
| *RCh* | *Ri chos nges don rgya mtsho* by Shes-rab rgyal-mtshan, Dol-bu-pa –. |
| *RK* | *Rin po che rtsod pa'i 'khor lo, T* Vol. 144, No. 5841. |
| *RS* | *Rang gzhung gsal ba'i me long* by Śākya mchog-ldan, gSer-mdog Paṇ-chen –. |

| | |
|---|---|
| *RT* | *Rin chen gter mdzod*, Paro 1976 |
| *ShK* | *Shes bya kun khyab* by Yon-tan rgya-mtsho, Kong-sprul –. |
| *ShT* | *Shing rta chen po'i srol gnyis* by Śākya mchog-ldan, gSer-mdog Paṇ-chen –. |
| *SK* | *Sa skya bka' 'bum*, Tokyo 1968. |
| *SM* | *bSam gtan mig sgron* by Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, gNubs-chen –. |
| *SNy* | *gSang ba snying po, K* Vol. 10, No. 455 (Kaneko No. 187). |
| *SPS* | *Śatapiṭaka Series.* |
| *STh* | *gSer thur* by Śākya mchog-ldan, gSer-mdog Paṇ-chen –. |
| *T* | *bsTan 'gyur, The Tibetan Tripiṭaka*, Tokyo 1957. |
| *TD* | *sTong thang ldan dkar dkar chag* (See Lalou 1953). |
| *TG* | *bsTan pa'i sgron me* by Shes-rab-'od, Rog ban-dhe –. |
| *ThCh* | *Theg pa chen po'i tshul la 'jug pa* by Chos-kyi bzang-po, Rong-zom –. |
| Tohoku | *A catalogue of the Tohoku University Collection of Tibetan Works on Buddhism*, Sendai 1953. |
| *TRSh* | *lTa ba'i rim pa bshad pa* by dPal-brtsegs, sKa-ba –. |
| *TTGL* | *gTer ston brgya rtsa'i rnam thar* by Yon-tan rgya-mtsho, Kong-sprul –. |
| *TY* | *bsTan pa yongs kyi snying po, Bairo rgyud 'bum*, Vol. I, No. I. |
| *YTh* | *gYu'i thang ma kras dgu, T* Vol. 83, No. 4729. |
| *YN* | *Yid bzhin nor bu* by Rin-chen-grub, Bu-ston –. |
| *YS* | *Yang gsal* by Blo-bzang chos-rgyan, Paṇ-chen –. |
| *ZhL* | *Zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thigs phreng* by dKon-mchog bstan-pa'i sgron-me, Gung-thang –. |
| *ZhNy* | *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud* (See Bonpo Sources). |

# INTRODUCTION

With the foundation of bSam-yas, the first Buddhist monastery, in 775 A.D. Buddhism took a decisive step to becoming the state religion of Tibet. It was officially inaugurated by the king Khri Srong-lde-btsan (742–797) in his edict in 779 A.D.[1] If Buddhism was adopted as the official religion, it was partly because its practice already dated back to the reign of Srong-btsan sgam-po (d. 649) and partly also because of its philosophical views which were thought to be more rational than those of other current beliefs known to the Tibetans such as Manicheism, Nestorianism, Taoism or the pre-Buddhist religion which according to the Tibetan historical tradition is Bon.[2]

The choice of Buddhism was not merely an expediency. Before choosing it, Khri Srong-lde-btsan made a critical evaluation which suggests that it was not simply because of his faith in it, but because of his predilection for the reasoning (*gtan tshigs*) on which the religion was believed to have been based and with which it was professed.

It was at the age of twenty in 761 A.D. that he began to contemplate the idea of taking up again the religion which had been subjected to a ban since the assassination of his father Khri lDe-gtsug-btsan in 755 A.D. It was also about this time that the *bka' mchid* was written and issued as the conclusion of his critical reflection upon the faith and after discussion with his vassals and ministers. It is a contemporary account concerning the adoption of the religion which eventually led to the decision to found bSam-yas.[3] This king therefore not only restored Buddhism but also took a further step in making it his official religion.

The adoption of it as the state religion took place in a period when the Tibetan Empire was at its apogee. Its political and military power reached the four corners of Asia: in the east, Ch'ang-an (now Xi'an), the capital of the T'ang Dynasty was captured in 762 and the Chinese who had previously discontinued paying tributes to the Tibetans were again obliged to give 50,000 silk rolls each year; in the west, Gilgit was made a vassal state; in the north, Turkestan became virtually a part of the empire; in the south, the Pāla kings of Bengal were made to pay tributes.

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[1] *bKa' gtsigs* (Richardson 1980).

[2] Cf. *bKa' yang dag pa'i tshad ma* (Stein 1980, pp. 330–337).

[3] *bKa' mchid, KhG* Ja, f. 110a3–111b2.

## The cause of the Tibetan decline

Although the adoption of Buddhism as the state religion at the summit of the empire gave birth to an influx of foreign religious culture, it also ironically marked the beginning of the Tibetan political decline.

The doctrine of "cause and effect" in Buddhism is the ideology crucial to promoting its spread. Kings merely become subordinate and at best auxiliary agents for maintaining the propagation of the faith. They themselves like other beings cannot escape from going through the samsāric transmigration. How this ideology came to be reconciled with the world vision of the ancient Tibetans is still little known. According to the indigenous belief, the Tibetan kings were direct descendants of the gods of Phyva. They came down from heaven to reign over the black headed people. Moreover, they were gods like the Phyva themselves and so were imbued with supernatural qualities such as *byin*, "splendour" of body for the overpowering of political and military opponents and *'phrul*, "magic sagacity" of mind enabling them to sustain the order of the world.[4]

Nevertheless, Buddhism seems to have adjusted itself, as it usually did in the countries where it spread, to the native beliefs by assimilating the indigenous conception of kingship and the notion of royal powers to its own notions: the term *byin* came to be used in conjunction with *rlabs* to form the word *byin rlabs* (*adhiṣṭhāna*) and *'phrul* with *rdzu*, *rdzu 'phrul* (*ṛidd-hi*) or with other similar Buddhist terms. Both the terms, subsequently almost entirely lost their original and early connotation. The kings themselves became simply *chos rgyal* (*dharmarāja*) and were finally subjected to the Buddhist moral code. They later had fears about taking any more military actions, because of contamination by *sdig pa* (*pāpa*), "sin". The confession for a king probably Khri gTsug-lde-btsan (805–838), in which a Sino-Tibetan border conflict involving killing men and animals is recorded, can still be read.[5]

Another major factor which is political and economic and which seems to have enhanced the decline is the establishment of the Buddhist monastic institution and more precisely the system of maintenance which began to evolve from the time of the ordination of the first seven Tibetan monks. The model of the monastic discipline of bSam-yas was the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition, one of the earliest Śrāvaka sects which was once flourished in north-western India. As a Buddhist monk, Śāntarakṣita who ordained the seven Tibetans, belonged to this

[4] *PT* 16, f. 34a4: *sku la byin chags/ thugs la 'phrul mnga' . . ./* Cf. Macdonald 1971, pp. 337–39.

[5] F.W. Thomas, *Tibetan literary texts and documents concerning Chinese Turkestan*, London 1951, Vol. II, p. 79.

tradition. It seems that most of the seven Tibetans were selected from noble families and were ordained after the completion of bSam-yas. gSal-snang known as Ye-shes dbang-po was from the family dBa' who had played from the very beginning a considerable part in the unification of the Tibetan war-like states in the reign of King gNam-ri slon-btsan. dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po seems to have been a married man before he became a monk and from an early age, he was in the service of the government. He was instrumental in arranging the invitation to Śāntarakṣita. His inclination towards Indian Buddhism therefore goes back to his early days before his ordination and later in the philosophical debate between the Indian and Chinese factions, he was a key figure. After the death of Śāntarakṣita he was immediately appointed by Khri Srong-lde-btsan as the first Tibetan abbot of bSam-yas with the title bCom-ldan-'das-kyi Ring-lugs.[6]

On the cultural level, nevertheless, the edifice of the main temple and those fourteen surrounding it in bSam-yas represent the greatest artistic achievement during the reign of Khri Srong-lde-btsan and indeed in ancient Tibetan history. The architectural design of the whole complex was based on the Buddhist theories of cosmogony. The interior decorations of each temple, such as images, frescoes and other iconographical works were executed according to the Buddhist legends as related in the sūtras as well as in certain tantras. The ground floor of the main temple was decorated according to the Tibetan style whilst the second and the third floors were in the Chinese and Indian styles respectively witnessing to the conception of the new faith as being a universal religion.[7]

## The beginning of the Tibetan monastic culture

Śāntarakṣita was the founder of the Buddhist philosophical school known as Yogācāramadhyamaka[8] and it was mainly this mahāyānic philosophy that prevailed at bSam-yas. His theories were later defended and developed by his disciple Kamalaśīla in his famous work the *Madhayama-kāloka*.[9] However, this philosophical tradition itself soon became insignificant in Tibet; it was overtaken by the more purist Madhyamaka, the Prāsaṇgika from the eleventh century onwards. The Buddhism which was propagated in bSam-yas was therefore a combination of the early

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6 *BZh* pp. 9–13.

7 The top storey of the main temple was destroyed and so were most of the other temples in bSam-yas during the Chinese "Cultural Revolution" late 1960s.

8 *PT* 814 (D.S. Ruegg, "Autour du *lTa ba'i khyad par* de Ye shes sde", *JA* Tome CCLXIX, 1981, p. 217).

9 *T* Vol. 101, No. 5287; D.S. Ruegg, *The Literature of the Madhyamaka School of Philosophy in India*, Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 1981, pp. 94, 96.

Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition as the basis of its monastic system and Yogācāramadhyamaka as its principal philosophy.

The monastic establishment initiated the development of a whole new religious culture on an unprecedented scale. The learning of foreign languages was instituted. With it came the activities of translating Buddhist texts from Sanskrit and Chinese into Tibetan. Foreign Buddhist masters soon flocked into bSam-ye. Tibetan monks for the first time were able to begin to contemplate writing Buddhist treatises.

The tradition maintains that it was some time during this period that the king commissioned Ba-gor Vairocana to go to India with a companion in search of more Buddhist texts and new doctrines, especially the doctrine which Padmasambhava only began to teach just before he left Tibet, but was unable to finish.[10] Vairocana is considered to be one of the first seven Tibetan monks and also the one who introduced rDzogs chen into Tibet from India.

The activities of translating Buddhist sūtras mainly from Sanskrit continued in a vigorous manner, but whether tantras should also be translated seems to have been a subject of discussion in the "Religious Council",[11] and an object of particular attention to dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po. According to a certain version of *BZh*, most of the tantras were considered to be unsuitable for the Tibetans to practise (including Atiyoga tantras) and were therefore not permitted to be translated. Only the Ubhayā type of tantras were thought to be suitable.[12] However that may be, certain tantras were probably already translated. We know that a special temple known as bDud-'dul sngags-pa-gling was dedicated to the tantric[13] divinities in bSam-yas.[14]

However, the development of Buddhist learning and the importation of foreign religious culture from all sides soon reached its climax with the famous Sino-Indian Buddhist controversy. It was officially encouraged

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[10] Cf. *BZh* pp. 26, 64.

[11] *BZh: chos kyi 'dun sa* (p. 27); *'dug pa* (*'dun sa*, p. 53); *lha chos kyi 'dun sa* (*KhG* ff. 114a5); *bcom ldan 'das kyi ring lugs kyi mdun* (*'dun*) *sa* (*GB* p. 73–4–5). This "Religious Council" is also described as *'dun sa che ba* whereas the "Council of Ministers" (*zhang blon gyi 'dun sa*) is *'dun sa chung ngu* (*KhG* Ja, f. 114a5, 136b6).

It is not known how the "Religious Council" functioned in relation to the "Council of Ministers" which according to the Annals (*PT* 1288) were held one in summer and another in winter in different places. On the other hand, the Annals are almost totally silent with regard to the religious events.

[12] *BZh* p. 52; Cf. also p. 121, n. 2.

[13] By the term "tantric" I understand all the teachings stemming from tantras and non-sūtrayanic Buddhist doctrines and practices. However, as the term is so vague in its connotation and has often been misused, it is advisable to be prudent in its application (see Snellgrove 1968, p. 147).

[14] *BZh* p. 39.

and the king was determined to see the Buddhism of the winner chosen for the country. In this, scholars see a political motive working against the Chinese party. While one faction was following the logically orientated Indian Buddhism, the other advocated the quietistic approach of Chinese Buddhism, the Ch'an. The debate lasted about three years from 792 to 794. The question of which side won the debate is still unsettled among historians, but the Tibetan historical tradition claims that it ended in favour of Indian Buddhism, and that the king issued a decree confirming the latter's superiority, and that from that time on, Tibetan Buddhists should uphold the philosophy of Nāgārjuna.[15]

The debate however had an adverse effect on the development of the monastery. Vairocana was banished to Tsha-ba-rong; Hva-shang-Mahāyana, the Chinese monk was expelled to Tun-huang and Kamalaśīla, the Indian master was murdered in sGra-bsgyur-gling in bSam-yas.[16] Khri Srong-lde-btsan himself according to the tradition withdrew into retreat in Zung-kar in order to practice meditation in 797, but he probably died in that year.[17] A bitter struggle of succession to the throne among his sons followed. The monastery itself then for a short while seems to have fallen into decay and, soon certain tantric teachings were "wrongly practised" (*log par spyod pa*).

When the monastery regained its vitality during the reign of Khri lDe-srong-btsan (776–815), the "Religious Council" once again took up the question of the unsuitability of the tantras as a teaching for the Tibetans. Around 814 it was finally settled that if a lo-tsā-ba wished to make a translation of a tantra he must ask for authorisation from the "Religious Council" and it is interesting to notice what a contemporary document has to say in this connection:

> "(All lexical work) must be presented to the 'Religious Council' presided over by the bCom-ldan-'das-kyi Ring-lugs at the Palace and to the 'Editorial Board'. If approved, it can then be added to the dictionary (i.e. *Mahāvyutpatti*).
>
> The tantras are to be kept hidden in accordance with their basic texts. Their contents should not be disclosed to those who are unsuitable to receive them. Recently some tantras were allowed to be translated and practised, but there were people who, unable to understand the intention behind them, took the literal meaning and practised them wrongly. It is known that terms have been collected from tantras and then translated into Tibetan, but from now on unless authorised, neither *dharaṇī* nor tantras are permitted to be translated and no vocabulary is to be collected from them."[18]

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[15] *Ibid.*, p. 62.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 64.
[17] Cf. *KhG* Ja, f. 127a2.
[18] *pho brang du bcom ldan 'das kyi ring lugs kyi mdun* (*PT* 845: *'dun*) *sa dang/ dharma* (*PT: dar ma*) *zhu chen 'tshal* (*PT: 'tsal*) *ba'i grar phul la/ snyan du zhus te bkas bcad nas/ skad kyi dkar*

During the reign of Khri gTsug-lde-btsan (805–838), it is said that certain types of tantras, particularly *Ma rgyud* were forbidden to be translated into Tibetan.[19] All this shows that during the royal period, tantras were looked upon with suspicion and their spread subjected to restriction despite the fact that they were a flourishing faith in the Buddhist monastic universities in India at the time. However, what surprises us is that the "Religious Council" presided over by the abbot of bSam-yas was a very powerful and fastidious body which certainly tried to control the spread of tantric teachings in the country. The other main task of this body was to maintain the monastic communities on the basis of the Vinaya as pure as possible like the tradition of the Mūlasarvāstivāda itself. All this explains why the early Buddhist catalogues, like the *lDan dkar ma* mentions hardly any tantras or the *Mahāvyutpatti* contains such a small number of tantric terms.

In spite of the watchfulness of the "Religious Council", one would expect that certain people followed the tantric teachings all the same and as will be seen it became the dominant faith during the period following the collapse of the monastic institution and the central authority.

The role of the semi-legendary figure, Padmasambhava, in introducing Tantrism into Tibet has been an object of much eulogy in retrospect by the rNying ma pa, but there is no good evidence for proving what he really taught in Tibet apart from the reference in *BZh* according to which he taught the Kīla cycle and this is supported by a Tun-huang document, but again there it already appears like a mythical story.[20] In the narration of *BZh*, he is in fact invited by Śāntarakṣita as his aid and his role appears only as an "exorcist", but his "exorcism" soon provoked displeasure among the ministers and he was finally obliged to leave Tibet even before bSam-yas was founded.[21] His part in establishing Buddhism therefore looks very insignificant. This, moreover, concords with the generally unfavourable attitude towards Tantrism in this period.

*chags* (*chag, PT: cag*) *gi dkyus su bsnan no* (*PT: bsnand to*)/ *gsang sngags kyi rgyud* (*PT: sngags kyi rgyud*) *rnams gzhung gi* (*PT: gis kyang*) *gsang bar bya ba yin tel snod du ma gyur ba rnams la bshad cing bstan du yang mi rung la/ bar du bsgyur cing* (*PT: zhing*) *spyod du gang gis kyang/ ldem po dag du bshad pa ma khrol* (*PT: khrel*) *nas sgra ji bzhin du 'dzin cing log par spyod pa dag kyang 'byung* (*PT: byung*)/ *sngags kyi rgyud kyi nang nas thu zhing bod skad du bsgyur* (*PT: sghyur*) *ba dag kyang byung zhes gdags kyi* (*PT:* gda's kyis)/ *phyin chad gzungs sngags dang rgyud blad nas bka' stsal te/ sgyur du bcugs pa ma gtogs pa/ sngags kyi rgyud dang sngags kyi tshig thu zhing bsgyur du mi gnang ngo/* (*PT: phyin cad kyang gzung sngags dang/ bla nas bka' stsald te sgyur du bcug pa la ma gtogs par sngags kyi rguyd dang sngags kyi tshig thu zhing sgyur du myi gnang ngo*)/ *GB* p. 73–4–5.

19 *KhG* Ja, f. 132b7–133al. In the mid-eleventh century, the mother tantras were again a target of attack (Cf. Karmay 1980, p. 17).

20 *BZh* p. 26; *PT* 44.

21 *BZh* pp. 18, 20, 26–27.

## The system for the maintenance of the monastic communities

After the completion of bSam-yas and the ordination of the monks, it was agreed that the monastic community, which was soon increased to three hundred monks, would be maintained by the state which also provided the funds for the offerings in the temples.

The provisions for its livelihood were known as *rkyen* or *rkyen ris*, "reserved provision". However, it is stated that the abbot, Ye-shes dbang-po soon requested the king that the "Religious Council" be given an over-ruling position to the "Council of Ministers" (*zhang blon gyi 'dun sa*), that the abbot must have the right to participate in the meetings of the latter, and that an independent system of maintenance for the monastic communities be created in such a way that no one else can interfere with them. The king and his government finally consented to the intransigence of the abbot: two hundred families for the fund of the religious offerings in the temples, and three families to provide the provisions of each monk. There were, therefore, 1100 families working for the monks in bSam-yas alone. This lay community was called *lha ris*, "domain of the gods". They were exempted from civil and military service as well as from all taxation. The monastery had absolute authority over them.[22]

A few decades later, this same system was further strengthened. Instead of three families, the king Khri gTsug-lde-btsan (805–838) ordered seven families to be allocated to each monk living in all the religious communities.[23] Supposing the number of monks in bSam-yas, which was three hundred, still remained the same, the monastery alone would now have possessed 2100 families plus two hundred families for the fund of the offerings. Already in the reign of the king Khri lDe-srong-btsan (776–815), important religious figures, for example, Myang Ting-nge-'dzin, who was a monk and served as a tutor as well as a minister, was given a large territory in the 'Bri-gung valley as his own estate where he built the famous temple Zhva'i lha-khang.[24] The king Khri gTsug-lde-btsan consented to a minister for the erecting of a temple in sTod-lung. This temple had only four monks, but all the same, it was given a certain amount of land with people to work on it as well as livestock.[25]

Buddhist monastic communities therefore began from the very beginning to have their own properties in much the same way as the nobles, however contradictory to the Vinaya principles it would seem. The only difference seems to be that the nobles worked for the state whereas the monastic communities did not.

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 53–54; *KhG* Ja, f. 114a4–114b6.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 74; *KhG* Ja, f. 133al.
[24] Richardson 1952, pp. 151–54; 1953, pp. 6–7.
[25] mTshur-phu inscription (Richardson 1949).

Right from the time of dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po, ecclesiastical interference in the affairs of the state would seem to be inevitable, for, on the one hand, the "Religious Council" seems to have been in a position from which it could influence political decisions; on the other, absolute monastic authority over an already large section of the population could have been a counter-check to the lay government. Khri Srong-lde-btsan's religious policy therefore created a contradiction which ultimately led to the destruction of his own line by a member of the ecclesiastical body which he himself instituted and so of the empire within the space of only sixty-five years from the date of the foundation of bSam-yas.

## Persecution of the monastic establishment

At the time lHa-sras Dar-ma, later popularly known by the nick-name Glang Dar-ma, ascended the throne in 838, Tibetans were still largely in control of Central Asia and certain north-western regions of China, particularly of Tun-huang. They were also maintaining large garrisons on the Sino-Tibetan borders.

On the religious scene, the monastic establishments continued to thrive, but events took a sudden turn. The Tibetan Buddhist historians consider this king as the enemy of their faith because he is believed to have persecuted Buddhism which according to them became as a result almost non-existent after the king's death. However, a closer look at the early documents show that Buddhism, on the contrary, was a flourishing religion, at least in its tantric aspect, after the disappearance of the king.[26] It was, therefore, not a question of persecution of the faith as a religion, but its monastic establishments, for by the time of Glang Dar-ma's reign, they already constituted a wealthy and powerful body totally independent of the state. The motive of the persecution was therefore political as well as economic and it took place around 841. There is no good evidence that the Bon religion was involved in this conflict as certain authors have stated.[27]

In the narration of *BZh*, Glang Dar-ma would seem to be anti-Chinese. His suspicion of the intentions of Srong-btsan sgam-po's Chinese wife and his disrespect of the image, Jo-bo, which she brought to Tibet[28] and the Chinese description of him as having a wicked character[29] seem to suggest that in his time Sino-Tibetan relations were again hostile as they had been most of the time in the royal period in spite of the peace treaty

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[26] *PT* 840 (Karmay 1981, pp. 207–210).
[27] H. Hoffmann, *The Religions of Tibet*, London 1961, p. 81.
[28] *BZh* pp. 78–79.
[29] *BA* p. 53.

between the two countries concluded only about two decades earlier.

Glang Dar-ma's attack on the monastic institution was mainly aimed at dismantling the maintenance system of the religious communities and it is no wonder that this action should have provoked the wrath of the monastic community. lHa-lung dPal-gyi rdo-rje is the usual name of the person who murdered the king and in an early document this name is given as the 9th in a series of names of religious masters in bSam-yas beginning with dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po, the first abbot. We therefore presume that it was the 9th abbot of bSam-yas who murdered the king in 842 A.D.[30]

## The age of the diffusion of Tantrism

After the assassination of Glang Dar-ma, Tibetan history enters into its darkest period. It stretches from 842 to about 1000. Yet the political, religious and cultural developments that began during this period would seem to have made a large contribution to the Tibetan Buddhist cultural "Renaissance" which emerged again from the beginning of the eleventh century.

As there are very few contemporary records we can say very little exactly what went on during this long period. All the same, two distinctive developments seem to stand out: on the one hand, the disintegration of Tibetan unity (a reversion to the state in which it was formerly in the reign of King gNam-ri slon-btsan), and the political, economical and social anarchy that followed; on the other, the resurgence of the banned Buddhist tantric teachings after the break-up of the monastic establishments and the disappearance of the somewhat pedantic and purist "Religious Council".

The murder of the king by the Buddhist monk left no clear successor to the throne. The dispute in the royal family concerning the legitimacy of the succession to the throne, which was occupied by Khri 'Od-srung when he was of age, paved the way for a general discontent of the people (*kheng log*) in 929. It gradually developed into a civil war between two factions: one was led by the dBa' family and the other, the 'Bro family. The political rivalry between the two was already noticeable in the Sino-Indian Buddhist controversy. While the dBa' favoured Indian Buddhism, the 'Bro, Chinese Buddhism.

Eight years after the break-up of the central authority, the Tibetans soon began to lose their grip on the foreign territories in Turkestan. They were driven out from the Chinese region of Tun-huang which had been under Tibetan occupation since 787.

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[30] See p. 78.

As the civil war raged, certain members of the royal family were forced to migrate to western Tibet while some others to north-eastern Tibet, Amdo. In mNga'-ris a dynasty was founded which later played a considerable part in the re-establishment of Buddhism in the eleventh century. In central Tibet, political and social chaos was total. The ancient royal tombs were looted around 937 and temples and monasteries were abandoned.

It was in this confused state that the tantric teachings, especially the Mahāyoga tantras began to be taken up. Buddhist tantrism unlike the monastic system, does not require communal organisation nor does it depend on lay support like the monastic community. Any married man or a householder can take up the teaching provided that he is initiated by a qualified master. However, certain categories of tantras teach doctrines which are usually considered as "extremist". It was this type of tantras, mostly Mahāyoga whose practice was formerly banned that now reappeared without fear of restriction by any kind of authority.

*Guhyagarbha*,[31] the basic work of the Mahāyoga tantras seems to be one of the tantras which was now popular. It is reputed to have been translated during the eighth century from Sanskrit, but in later centuries it came to be regarded as not authentic since it professes the doctrines of *sbyor*, "sexual union" and *sgrol*, "deliverance" amongst others. The practice of these doctrines was widespread during the period in question. A contemporary document shows that the practice created not only confusion in the understanding of Buddhist doctrines in general, but also brought about economic and social problems as it required the use of domestic animals as a fee for receiving religious instructions as well as for sacrifice and taking married or unmarried females as partners.[32]

## The formation of a new philosophical doctrine: rDzogs chen, the "Great Perfection"[33]

In contrast to the monastic establishment in the royal period, tantric teaching was now the dominant belief, but beside this mainstream of

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[31] See p. 139.
[32] *PT* 840 (Karmay 1981).
[33] The term *rdzogs chen* is often translated by "Great Achievement" (*BA* p. 128 et passim), but achievement suggests something that is achieved through strenuous effort. This contradicts the central point of the rDzogs chen philosophy which conveys not only the concept of "spontaneity" and "effortlessness", but also that which is already perfected from the very beginning (*ye nas lhun rdzogs*).

In later literature, the word is given as an equivalent of *mahāsanti*, but the origin of this term is not known (Cf. p. 47, n. 26). On the other hand, in *PT* 849 (Hackin 1924, p. 30), it is used to translate *paripūrṇa*, but in *Mvy*, *paripūrṇa* is rendered by *shin tu rgyas pa* (341) and *yongs su rdzogs pa* (1287). Cf. pp. 175–76.

tantrism, a new philosophical speculation seems to have begun to develop. It is this philosophy which, borrowing the term *rdzogs chen* from the *Guhyagarbha* or similar tantras to designate itself, was to leave a strong imprint on Tibetan Buddhism in later centuries. Whether this philosophy existed or not in the eighth century is at present a matter of guess work, for we find no evidence to prove either case. It is, however, interesting to notice in passing that in an old fresco from bSam-yas depicting the complex of the monastery, a small temple is shown to be dedicated to the doctrine of rDzogs chen, but its existence is not mentioned even in *BZh*. It must therefore have been built in a much later period.

However, in this philosophy, the Mahāyoga tantric teachings are given a different philosophical interpretation linking them to its central theories of *ye nas lhun gyis grub pa*, "Primal Spontaneity" and *gdod nas dag pa* or *ka dag*, "Primeval Purity".[34] In all this, the Ch'an teaching certainly played its part in the theoretical development, but only in one of its many aspects. rDzogs chen then came to constitute the ninth, Atiyoga, of the nine categories of Buddhist doctrines, a classification also elaborated in the same period.

rDzogs chen is therefore essentially and necessarily a syncretism of the Mahāyoga tantric teachings on the one hand, the theories of "Primal Spontaneity" and "Primeval Purity" on the other.

Amongst the early masters, Buddhagupta[35] is one whose work has come down to us showing the stages of the development of the doctrine. The latter certainly inspired gNyan dPal-dbyangs to write several short treatises on the doctrine.[36] Another work, the *Rig pa'i khu byug*,[31] which is considered by the tradition to be a translation of Vairocana, is equally important in the development of the philosophy.

These works a little later served as the primary sources for gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes in writing the unique work, *bSam gtan mig sgron*.[38] gNyan dPal-dbyangs is considered by the tradition as a master of gNubs. All these masters were primarily adepts of the Mahāyoga tantric teachings. With the emergence of gNubs and his work, rDzogs chen by the tenth century became a well-established philosophical doctrine, but nevertheless always remained a side development of the mainstream of tantric Buddhism in the period.

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[34] See p. 176.
[35] See pp. 61–63.
[36] See pp. 65–69.
[37] See p. 56.
[38] See p. 86.

As there was no authoritative body of any kind, monastic or otherwise, to check the unreined development of tantric practice, a variety of rituals connected with Mahāyoga tantras came into existence. Towards the end of the tenth century, lHa Bla-ma Ye-shes-'od, who was formerly a king of mNga'-ris and belonged to the line of the Tibetan royal descendants migrated to western Tibet, therefore began to have grave doubts whether those Buddhist practices which were popular in his time were genuine. To this effect, he issued an edict stating his disapproval and warning of the consequences.[39] His critical views of the tantras and determination to put an end to the doubtful religious practices eventually resulted in the coming of Atiśa to Tibet in 1042, and thus began a new phase of Buddhism in the Land of Snows.

## Tibetan Buddhism (Lamaism): Co-ordination of Sūtrayāna and Mantrayāna

The mission for which Atiśa was destined to come to Tibet was mainly to refute the Buddhist tantric practices which prevailed in the country and so to put Buddhism on the right course, but then tantric teachings in Indian monasteries themselves had already long since been part and parcel of Buddhist practice.

lHa-btsun Byang-chub-'od, the grand nephew of the lHa Bla-ma, is believed to have put seven questions to Atiśa concerning tantric teachings as then known to him,[40] the principal one being whether it was appropriate for Buddhist monks to take up the tantric teachings. To answer these questions, Atiśa composed the short but very influential work, the *Bodhipathapradīpa*[41] explaining that a Buddhist monk can and must practise the tantric teachings, but without breaking his monastic vows.[42] Moreover, the tantric teaching is in fact to be regarded as essential for the attainment of Buddhahood. Atiśa's work therefore inspired the development of the doctrine according to which a Buddhist monk must be bound to monastic vows whilst following the tantric teachings in a co-ordination of sūtrayānic and mantrayānic (*mdo sngags zung 'brel gyi theg pa*) doctrines. Most of the Buddhist schools which began to appear in the eleventh cen-

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[39] *bKa' shog* (Karmay 1979).

[40] dPal-mang dKong-mchog rgyal-mtshan (1764–1853), *Byang chub lam gyi sgron me'i 'grel ba phul byung dgyes pa'i mchod sprin, Collected Works*, Vol. 4, No. 1, New Delhi 1974, pp. 51–53.

[41] *T* Vol. 103, No. 5378.

[42] Cf. D.S. Ruegg, "Deux problèmes d'exégèse et pratique tantrique", *Tantric and Taoist Studies in honour of R.A. Stein, Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques*, vol. XX, Bruxelles, 1981, pp. 213 et seq.

tury in Tibet largely accepted this doctrine as the fundamental tenet of their Buddhist practice. However, a certain segment of the Buddhists all the same remained Tantrists, especially the rNying ma pa.

## The position of the rNying ma pa tradition

As the new doctrine of the co-ordination of Sūtrayāna and Mantrayāna set about consolidating and translations of tantras previously unknown in Tibet began to appear, those who clung faithfully to the tantric tradition, which only began after the persecution of monasticism came to be identified as the rNying ma pa, The "Ancients". This identity led into a compromising position. They, like the Bonpo with their master Dran-pa nam-mkha', claim that their tradition is a continuity of the early Buddhist establishment by Padmasambhava in the royal period. However, we have so far found no early records proving this. Their tradition seems to be therefore the survivor of the tantric teachings which flourished only after the murder of Glang Dar-ma. Largely because of this, the rNying ma pa were continually viewed as "unorthodox" and their tantras mostly as "unauthentic" which however by the time of Ratna gling-pa (1403–1478) ran into the hundreds and came to constitute the composite collection known as *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*.

rDzogs chen, too, is naturally viewed in the same perspective. In the mid-eleventh century, the great master, Rong-zom Chos-kyi bzang-po, therefore felt the need to defend this doctrine. To this effect, he wrote his important work, *ThCh*,[43] but without avail. It continued to be relentlessly regarded as "not genuine" Buddhist teaching, and so has been a controversial subject throughout the centuries. Yet, the place of rDzogs chen in Tibetan Buddhism in general is unique, for it is the only doctrine that has been adhered to not only by the rNying ma pa, but also by the non-Buddhist, the Bonpo. No early texts have so far been found showing since when the latter began to embrace this doctrine, but there is ample evidence that it certainly goes back to the eleventh century if not earlier. Certain theories in rDzogs chen were conceived in conjunction with early popular and native beliefs, such as the dissolution of the material body into lights which is textually attested in rDzogs chen only from the eleventh century.

In spite of the aloofness of the rDzogs chen philosophy, it always had a leaning towards eclecticism, perhaps due to the positive character of its philosophical outlook. A number of Tibet's greatest luminaries and eclectic figures are to be found within this tradition, for example, Klong-chen

[43] See p. 125.

rab-'byams (1308–1363) and rDo-rje gling-pa (1346–1405). Later in the seventeenth century great dGe lugs pa masters like Pan-chen Blo-bzang chos-rgyan (1567–1662), not to mention the Vth Dalai Lama (1617–1682), declared themselves to be adherents of this philosophy. It is therefore no exaggeration to say that at last it became a non-sectarian philosophy upheld both by various Buddhist sects and the Bonpo. This universal tendency was further enhanced by the nineteenth century Eclectic Movement led by such great masters, 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse (1820–1892) and Kong-sprul Yon-tan rgya-mtsho (1811–1899) and on the Bonpo side, Shar-rdza bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan (1859–1934).

Even though Tibetan civilisation is now being eradicated in its own land under foreign domination, it is most encouraging to notice that, on the basis of eclectic thought, it is still taught not only in the places where Tibetan Buddhism prevails but also in a number of Tibetan Buddhist meditation centres recently established in Europe and America under the auspices of its leading masters like, Rev. Namkhai Norbu.

# PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE

# THE LEGEND OF VAIROCANA

rDzogs chen is considered to have been introduced into Tibet by Vairocana in the eighth century from India. It is therefore important to examine first the various existing accounts of this illustrious figure in later and early Tibetan Buddhist and Bonpo sources. Without having some idea of the activities of Vairocana which are woven into the development of rDzogs chen thought, we can make no way in this uncharted territory of Tibetan religious studies.

Vairocana is said to be one of the first of seven Tibetans ordained by Śāntarakṣita as a Buddhist monk following the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition at the newly founded first monastery of bSam-yas and was given the name Vairocanarakṣita.

Later in the rNying ma pa tradition, he appears as a pupil of Padmasambhava and so figures among his twenty-five prominent disciples. He is often considered even as of equal status to Padmasambhava himself. However, above all, he is known to have been a great lo-tsā-ba. This role of his in establishing Buddhism is acknowledged by all later Tibetan Buddhist schools. Thus, in the eleventh century the bKa' gdams pa master, rNgog lo-tsā-ba Blo-ldan shes-rab (1059–1109), who himself was also renowned as a lo-tsā-ba, eulogizes him in these words:

> "Vairocana is equal to the sky.
> sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs and Cog-ro Klu'i rgyal-mtshan are like the sun and moon,
> Rin-chen bzang-po (958–1055) is simply like the great star in the early morning (Venus),
> I am merely a glow-worm."[1]

However, it is not only in Buddhist tradition that Vairocana possesses such an aura of prestige, but also in the Bonpo tradition in which he is presented as an eclectic figure upholding both faiths. This particular role which he plays at a time when Bon is said to have been under persecution is an important factor in later eclectic spiritual movements in the nineteenth century.

Vairocana's activities, however, are not confined to religion only, if we

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[1] *be ro tsa na nam mkha'i mtha' dang mnyam/ ska cog rnam gnyis nyi zla zung cig 'dra/ rin chen bzang po tho rangs skar chen tsam/ kho bo de drung srin bu me khyer tsam/* Ratna gling-pa (1403–1478), *rTsod zlog seng ge nga ro*, Palampur, 1972, p. 147.

are to believe the Tibetan tradition. On the one hand, he is credited with having made translations of medical texts, particularly the *rGyud bzhi* from Sanskrit. On the other, he is said to have made translations of works on astrology from Chinese.

Behind these legends, however, lay a personage of whom practically nothing is known historically. A general hagiographical account and the story of his journey to India are to be found in *Vairo 'dra 'bag*,[2] but it is a work of which some parts go back only to the thirteenth century and other parts are of much later origin. It presents itself in the main as an historical account of the diffusion of rDzogs chen in different countries notwithstanding its title. As it is the only text which gives a fairly detailed narration of the legends of Vairocana, I consider it, nevertheless, to be useful to give here a summary particularly of the chapters concerned with the life story of Vairocana and his translation activities before discussing other documents which have a connexion with him.

### *Chapter I (f. 1a–5b4)*

It is concerned with the mythical account of the diffusion of rDzogs chen variously named here as the doctrine of non-action (*rtsol med kyi bstan pa*), the doctrine of precepts (*man ngag gi chos*), or Atiyoga in 'Og-min (Akaniṣṭha). It is preached by four kinds of *kāya, viz*. Ngo-bo nyid-sku (*svabhāvakāya*), Chos-sku (*dharmakāya*), Longs-sku (*saṃbhogakāya*) and gSang-ba'i sku in four different heavens.

### *Chapter II (f. 5b4–17a2)*

This part deals with the origin of Vajrayāna. After dwelling summarily upon the general history of Buddhism, it goes on to deal with the origin of tantric teachings. It gives a detailed story of King Tsa and his manuscript volumes of tantras.[3] Atiyoga is presented as forming a part of the triple division of *bskyed rdzogs*, the different stages of meditation through which an adept must go.[4]

### *Chapter III (f. 17a1–21a3)*

It takes up the legendary account of the diffusion of Atiyoga in three kinds of heaven without however naming them (in fact they are: Akaniṣṭha, Sumeruśikhara and Alakāvatī).[5]

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[2] The full title: *rJe btsun thams cad mkhyen pa be ro tsa na'i rnam thar 'dra 'bag chen mo.*
[3] See Karmay 1981.
[4] Cf. 138.
[5] For references, see Karmay 1981, p. 198, n. 17.

*Chapter IV (f. 21a3–24b2)*

It is entitled "the history of the doctrine of non-action in the world". It first narrates the legends of dGa'-rab rdo-rje. In Oḍḍiyāna, a king called Dha-he-na ta-lo has a son called Thu-bo Ra-dza ha-ti (Rājahasti) and a daughter Bharaṇī. She becomes a nun. One day Vajrapāṇi transforms himself into a golden duck and pecks on her bosom while she is strolling on the shore of a lake. A year later she gives birth to a boy who recites the *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che*[6] as soon as he is born.[7] He is given the name dGa'-rab rdo-rje. Vajrapāṇi shows himself to the boy and gives him instructions in Atiyoga and other tantric doctrines. The great paṇḍita, 'Jam-dpal bshes-gnyen, contemporaneous with him resolves to have a debate with him as he hears that dGa'-rab rdo-rje is a follower of rDzogs chen, the doctrine of non-action and the doctrine that transcends all those of Sūtrayāna and Vajrayāna. dGa'-rab rdo-rje finally overpowers 'Jam-dpal bshes-gnyen who then becomes a disciple of the former. 'Jam-dpal bshes-gnyen then composes the *rDo la gser zhun*[8] as a compendium of his master's teachings.

*Chapter V (f. 24b2–43a2)*

This is concerned with the transmission of Atiyoga through different lineages of masters.

1. dGa'-rab rdo-rje
2. 'Jam-dpal bshes-gnyen
3. Dha-he-na ta-lo
4. Thu-bo Ra-dza ha-ti (Rājahasti)
5. Ba-ra-ni (Bharaṇī)
6. Klu'i rgyal-po
7. gNod-sbyin-ma Byang-chub-ma
8. sMad-'tshong-ma Ba-ra-ni (Bharaṇī)
9. mKhan-po Rab-snang of Kha-che (Cashmere)
10. mKhan-po Mahārāja of O-rgyan (Oḍḍiyāna)
11. Sras-mo Go-ma de-byi (Gomadevī)

[6] One of the 25 rDzogs chen tantras listed in *MNy*, f. 370; Cf. Kaneko Nos. 9, 13.
[7] This shows the existence of the idea of the virgin mother in Tibet. A similar story is also told in Bonpo texts, see Karmay 1972, p. xxi.
[8] One of the 18 Sems sde texts, see below.

12. A-tsan-tra alo-ke (Acintyāloke?)
13. Ku-ku ra-dza (Kukkurāja, the First)
14. Drang-srong Bha-shil-ta (Bhāṣita)
15. sMad-'tshong-ma bDag-nyid ma
16. Na-ga dzu-na (Nāgārjuna)
17. Kukkurāja (the Second)
18. 'Jam-dpal bshes-gnyen (the Second)
19. De-va ra-dza (Devarāja)
20. Bhu-ta kug-ta (Buddhagupta)
21. Shri sing-ha pra-pa-ta (Śrīsiṃhaprabhā)[9]
22. dGe-slong-ma Kun-dga'-mo
23. Bi-ma-la mi-tra (Vimalamitra)[10]

Nothing much is known about the historicity of most of the personages mentioned in this list. It is presented in a way that at first gives the impression of their being successive teachers, but in fact the text itself states that the names given here are not necessarily all in a diachronic order (*go rim nges pa med pa*). This is precisely the point, for the first five names of the list are names of members of one family except 'Jam-dpal bshes-gnyen. Two names on the list, 'Jam-dpal bshes-gnyen and Kukkurāja occur twice, but are indicated only by the word "former" (*snga ma*), when they appear the first time, and "latter" (*phyi ma*), the second time. The inclusion of names such as Devarāja, Nāgārāja and gNod-sbyin (*yakṣa*) proves that it is in fact not a list of names of people only. More unconvincing is the mentioning of Nāgārjuna, the originator of the Madhyamaka school. This clearly reveals the motive of the fabrication. It is to show that even the greatest Buddhist philosopher had practised their doctrine. As will be seen below, Vairocana meets both dGa'-rab rdo-rje and 'Jam-dpal-bshes-gnyen in India while it would seem that they were masters of the remote past. The existence of most of the personages in the list is therefore historically speaking out of spatio-temporal context. However, some of the names, for example, the first four, Nos. 10, 13 and the last four are mentioned in *SM* (p. 316). It is therefore certain that these names have been known at least from the tenth century. However, what is striking is that *PK* gives a totally different list of names, not twenty-three, but twenty-five in the same context.[11] This list, moreover,

[9] See n. 18.
[10] This number varies: 21 (f. 71a2), 25 (f. 78a2), 23 (f. 92a6, 97b2, 10b64). According to *TY*, the last 7, i.e. from No. 17 to 23 are called *bdun brgyud*, "Seven successions". This probably refers to the *rdzogs chen rgya gar bdun brgyud*, Cf. p. 93, n. 42.
It must be noted that both *Zangs gling ma* (f. 43b) and *MNy* (f. 369) do not give any list. The only master who is mentioned and whom Vairocana meets is Śrīsiṃha.
[11] F. 119b4.

includes many of the names of well known Indian Buddhist paṇḍitas. Only one name, Buddhagupta is common to both lists. In both cases, the motive of the creation is to prove the authenticity of rDzogs chen as is also the case with the Ch'an,[12] but it would seem that the people mentioned in the list of the *'Dra 'bag* have much more to do with rDzogs chen than those in the list of *PK*. Both lists were probably compiled in a period when rDzogs chen faced critics concerning its origin.

### *Chapter VI (f. 43a2–48b6)*

It is entitled "The coming of the doctrine of non-action to Tibet". At first, it takes up briefly the subject of the general history of Buddhism in Tibet. It then relates how the search for Atiyoga was undertaken.

King Khri Srong-lde-btsan in a former life was born in India as a monk called Avadhūti practising Atiyoga. Because of this, he now realises not only that Atiyoga is a teaching that transcends all other doctrines that were already known in Tibet or India.[13] Meanwhile, a number of boys are called in to learn Sanskrit, but soon they proved to be incapable of learning it. Padmasambhava then sees by his clairvoyance[14] a boy called Gan-jag thang-ta, aged eight living at sNye-mo bye-mkhar in gTsang with his father Ba-gor He-dod and mother Bran-za dKar-skyid.[15] He is the rebirth of Ānanda, the Buddha's attendant. (According to another version of the story in the same text, the boy was born to parents of different names living on the banks of the confluence of the rivers of Myang and gTsang[16] and is a rebirth of a monk called sPur-na (Puṇya) in rGyal-mo tsha-ba-rong.)[17]

The king as soon as he hears of him from Padmasambhava sets out with seven horsemen in search of him and eventually finds him playing near his home in the absence of his parents which gives the king the chance to talk to him freely. The king is struck by his intelligence and convinced that the boy was the one seen by Padmasambhava. He tells the

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[12] See p. 93, n. 41.

[13] According to *MNy* (f. 368), it is rDo-rje sems-dpa' who prophesied it to the king, but in *TY* (p. 141) Padmasambhava taught the *Man ngag dbang chen 'byams pa* to his followers just before his departure from Tibet and Khri Srong-lde-btsan understood that the master had quoted certain rDzogs chen texts in the above work and therefore realised the existence of the doctrine in India, Cf. p. 34.

[14] In *BZh* (pp. 26–27), it appears that Padmasambhava is no longer in Tibet when Vairocana is called to bSam-yas.

[15] It is this version that is found in *PK* (f. 116a).

[16] According to *TTGL* (pp. 71–72), the place is on the eastern bank of the river gTsang-po and to the east of bSam-'grub-rtse (gZhis-ga-rtse), near a village called Zangs-kar.

[17] See n. 31.

parents that the boy must go to bSam-yas to be educated and takes him there. He is made to learn Sanskrit and after seven years, he distinguishes himself and begins to make translations. He was chosen to be one of the seven members to be ordained by Śāntarakṣita and was given the name Vairocana, hence Ba-gor Vairocana.

Summoning his people including monks and ministers, the king tells them that in India there is a doctrine (such as that mentioned above) and he needs two men to go in search of it. Vairocana rises up among the people and says that he will go. Another young man called Legs-grub also rises and says that he will accompany Vairocana.

### *Chapter VII (f. 48b6–62a2)*

The family of Vairocana objects to his journey, but to no avail. The two monks set out from Avalokiteśvara temple where they spend their last days in bSam-yas. In a dream Vairocana perceives that one day he will be banished from bSam-yas, but that the expulsion will give him a good chance to convert the people of Tsha-ba-rong. The next day, the two monks leave bSam-yas for India. The difficult problems which they face on the way include snow, harrassment from malignant spirits, robbers, wild beasts, attacks from the toll-collectors at the crossings of gorges and rivers, the death of their only horse, arrests and imprisonments, and attacks from poisonous snakes. They go through what is called the "sixteen kinds of hardship" (*dka' ba bcu drug*).

After arriving in central India, they begin to make enquiries about masters in whose presence they could study. They go round in markets, villages and monasteries asking who is the abbot of this or that monastery or hermitage. All agree that Srīsiṃha[18] is the most learned and that he resides in a place called Dhahena, (in other texts the name is of a place in Oḍḍiyāna). However, just before the two Tibetans arrive there, a doctrinal dispute breaks out between two nuns concerning the theory of the "Single circle" (*thig le nyag gcig*),[19] which dispute is taken to be a bad omen for the disclosure of the precepts of Atiyoga to foreigners especially

[18] He is the principal master in whose presence Vairocana studies Atiyoga in India, but as to his origin, there are conflicting stories in rNying ma pa sources: a Śrīsiṃha was born to a king named Grub-byed and queen Nan-ta-ka in Sing-ga-la (Singhala), *'Dra 'bag*, f. 30b3, 42a3; another was born in China and was a teacher of Vimalamitra (Klong-chen rab-'byams, 1308–1363, *Bla ma yang tig*, Derge edition, Kha, f. 4a; *Tshig don mdzod*, f. 121b); still another one was a son of a king named sKar-rgyal in gSer-gling (Suvarṇadvīpa) and a master of Padmasambhava (*PK*, f. 63a); a Śrīsiṃhaprabhā assists Vairocana in making translations of several texts on rDzogs chen. Cf. Karmay 1975, p. 149.

[19] Cf. 118, n. 55.

to the Tibetans. Thereupon many works on the precepts are hidden in Vajrāsana and are sealed up by both the community in Dhehena and the king (whose name and place are not mentioned). A proclamation is made saying that whoever reveals the precepts will be punished. Their access to Dhahena therefore becomes even more difficult. Finally they manage to bribe a woman who works for the community fetching water. They send through her a message to Śrīsiṃha who then lets them in. They inform him that they were sent by King Khri Srong-lde-btsan to obtain the doctrine of Atiyoga which enables one to attain Buddhahood in the space of one lifetime. Śrīsiṃha says to them that because of the dispute which took place earlier, all paṇḍitas in the place have bad dreams and that works on precepts are all hidden away. However, he realises that the doctrine of non-action would bring great benefit to Tibet and advises the Tibetans that they first must study sūtras and tantras, which they do in the presence of other paṇḍitas of the place. They also meet in the same place dGa'-rab rdo-rje and 'Jam-dpal bshes-gnyen who in turn advises them to go back to Śrīsiṃha for the doctrine.

Śrīsiṃha and the Tibetans disguising themselves go to Vajrāsana and take out the works on Atiyoga from the hidden place and then come back to Dhahena.

### *Chapter VIII (f. 62a2–66b4)*

This part mainly deals with the story of the two Tibetans studying in the presence of Śrīsiṃha. During the day, they study tantras from other masters and during the night Śrīsiṃha teaches them Atiyoga in utter secrecy. The teaching is based on the eighteen texts known as *Sems sde bco brgyad*:[20]

1. *Rig pa'i khu byug* (Kaneko No. 8, 1)[21]
2. *brTsal chen sprugs pa* (Kaneko No. 8, 3)
3. *Thig le drug pa* (Kaneko No. 10, 10)
4. *Khyung chen lding ba* (Kaneko No. 8, 2)
5. *Mi nub rgyal mtshan*[22]
6. *Yid bzhin nor bu*
7. *rJe btsun dam pa* (Kaneko No. 10, 3)
8. *Yid spyod rgyal po*

[20] According to *MNy* (f. 370) and *Chos 'byung gter mdzod* (Vol. II, f. 2) the Tibetans were taught the 25 tantras first and then the 18 texts.

[21] On this text, see pp. 50, 56.

[22] *NyG* Ka, ff. 424–30. This is simply missed out in Kaneko's catalogue.

9. *Rin chen kun 'dus* (Kaneko No. 10, 4)
10. *bDe 'jam* (Kaneko No. 10, 1)
11. *Srog gi 'khor lo* (Kaneko No. 10, 5)
12. *Nam mhka'i rgyal po* (Kaneko No. 10, 11)
13. *bDe ba 'phra bkod* (Kaneko No. 10, 7)
14. *sPyi 'chings*
15. *rDo la gser zhun* (Kaneko No. 14)
16. *rTse mo byung rgyal* (Kaneko No. 10, 2)
17. *rMad du byung ba* (Kaneko No. 20)
18. – ? (*rDzogs pa spyi gcod*) (Kaneko No. 10, 8)

Considerable confusion reigns over this list among the rNying ma pa works. Each claims to have eighteen, but often gives only sixteen or seventeen as in the present case. The titles also vary from one source to another. The above titles however can be found in *NyG* more or less in the same order.[23] Except the Nos. 5, 6 and 8 the rest of the titles appear in *SM*. They therefore would seem to go back to the tenth century or earlier. The first five titles of the list are called the "Five early translations" (*snga 'gyur lnga*) on the grounds that they are believed to have been translated by Vairocana in bSam-yas before his expulsion. The remaining thirteen of the list are known as the "Thirteen later translations" (*phyi 'gyur bcu gsum*) because they are said to have been translated by Vimalamitra when Vairocana returned to bSam-yas from Tsha-ba-rong (f. 109a).[24]

After having taught the Tibetans, Śrīsiṃha asks if they are satisfied. Legs-grub replies that he is so and leaving his companion behind, he departs, but gets killed on the way by robbers in India at the age of forty-four. Vairocana however replies that he is not satisfied with the teaching. He lies down looking unhappy. His master wonders if he is unwell. Vairocana then expresses his feelings in a song:

"A person like me, Vairocana,
Has no physical illness,
But my spirit is ill, for I have heard, but not understood.
My spirit is ill, for I have seen, but could not make contact.
My spirit is ill, for I have experienced, but not been satisfied.

[23] In Kaneko's catalogue, the Nos. 1, 2, 4 of the 18 texts are grouped under No. 8, but in fact they are independent works as they occur in the *'Dra 'bag* and in many other works.

[24] However, according to *Grub mtha' mdzod* (f. 179a5), the Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5 and 15 are the *sNga 'gyur lnga*, but Sog-zlog-pa points out that No. 15 does not belong to this group (*bDag po rin po che'i chos 'byung la/ zhal snga nas blo bzang pas dgag pa mdzad pa. Collected Works*, Vol. II, No. 10, pp. 257–58). Therefore, there is no uniform list for all these texts in the rNying ma pa sources.

My spirit is ill, for I have gained no confidence in the eighteen
Sems sde texts.
I thus beg you again for a medicine to complete my studies."[25]

Vairocana is then introduced to numerous other texts. Finally he believes that he understands the significance of the "Six *Thig le*"[26] and the "Five *Che ba*"[27] among other doctrines connected with Atiyoga. He also studies other subjects, such as medicine[28] and tantric *sādhana* such as Phur pa.[29] Śrīsiṃha then advises that it is time that he returned to Tibet, because of the texts which he and Vairocana had taken out from the hidden place, and that the paṇḍitas of the place are not all that happy. Śrīsiṃha further tells him to obtain the feat of "swiftfootedness" (*rkang-mgyogs*) so that he will be able to travel fast.

*Chapter IX (f. 66b4–70a4)*

Vairocana succeeds in obtaining the magic for travelling fast and then leaves India for Tibet.

*Chapter X (f. 70a4–76a2)*

After the departure of Vairocana, the paṇḍitas in Dhahena who again have bad dreams gather together and discuss their dreams. They realise that the cause of bad dreams was the Tibetans who have taken their hidden texts with them. They plead with their king to pursue Vairocana, but the latter by this time has already arrived in Li country (Khotan) where he meets a nun called Tshul-khrims-sgron. After giving her instructions in Atiyoga, he leaves Li and arrives in Nepal[30] where he spends a month before setting out for Tibet. He at last arrives in bSam-yas and immediately

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25 f. 63a4: *bdag 'dra bai ro tsa na lags ste/*
*gzhan gyi nad de ma mchis te/*
*thos te ma go rang sems na/*
*mthong ste ma 'phrad rangs sems na/*
*myong ste ma tshims rang sems na/*
*nad gzhi sems sde bco brgyad la/*
*gdengs ma rnyed pas rang sems na/*
*de ltar nad kyis brdung* (*gdung*) *ba la/*
*mthar phyin sman cig da bzod* (*gzod*) *zhu/*

26 On these, see p. 118, n. 55.

27 See pp. 64, n. 18; 114, n. 40.

28 See n. 33.

29 Cf. p. 34.

30 The narration of Vairocana's trip to Li (Khotan) and Nepal is absent in both *MNy* (f. 369–76) and *Chos 'byung gter mdzod* (Vol. II, f. 38–39), and in *PK* (f. 122b6), he passes through Nepal, but not Li, Cf. n. 42.

informs the king and queen of his arrival by writing and at the same time he asks them to ignore any bad news of him they may hear from Indian paṇḍitas.

### *Chapter XI (f. 76a2–92a2)*

This chapter deals mainly with the expulsion of Vairocana to rGyal-mo Tsha-ba-rong.[31] After a short while, Vairocana is received by the king who gives him a large quantity of gifts and asks for instructions in Atiyoga. The former refuses the gifts saying that he has taken vows not to exchange his doctrine against gifts, and that he would instruct him only during the night when nobody else is around him. Vairocana then settles in the palace and occupies himself with making translations of numerous Buddhist texts including the first five of eighteen Sems sde texts as well as the *Kun byed rgyal po*.[32] He also makes translations of works on medicine,[33] astrology[34] and Bon texts.[35]

The king now wishes to give a feast to commemorate Vairocana's achievement, but the latter requests him to postpone it saying that he had a bad dream in which the sun and moon shone only in Tsha-ba-rong.

Meanwhile, in India a dispute breaks out between the paṇḍitas and their king in Dhahena, both parties suspect that the other has revealed the hidden texts to the Tibetans. Finally the Indians agree to spreading calumny in Tibet by saying that what Vairocana had attained in India is not the doctrine of Atiyoga, but magic spells which in the long run would do harm to Tibet.

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[31] The location of this place is uncertain. 'Bri-gung dPal-'dzin states that it is rGyal-mo-rong, but Sog-zlog-pa objects strongly and states that it is Tsha-ba-rong as it occurs in *BZh* (*NgD* pp. 265–66). The region of rGyal (also rGya)-mo-rong is situated in Southwest Amdo whereas Tsha-ba-rong is in Kham near mount Rong-btsan kha-ba dkar-po. This geographical confusion in fact stems from the two early sources: while *BZh* (p. 64) has Tsha-ba-rong, Sog-zlog-pa states that the *bKas bcad 'bring po* has rGyal-mo-rong. (The *bkas-bcad 'bring po* is *GB* which contains no historical account of Vairocana in the copy found in the *bsTan 'gyur* of the Peking edition. Did he see the *bKas bcad chung ngu*? According to Bu-ston, it was already not available in his time, (*bsTan 'gyur dkar chag yid bzhin nor bu'i za ma tog*, p. 563).

[32] Kaneko No. 1, Cf. also p. 207.

[33] According to *ChR* (Vol. II, f. 41), Vairocana made a translation of the *rGyud bzhi* and specifies the 4 medical texts. However, this tradition cannot be proved to be valid, Cf. Karmay 1988a.

[34] The tradition is persistent that Vairocana translated certain texts from the Chinese in the eighth century, Cf. Vth Dalai Lama, *rTsis dkar nag las brtsams pa'i dris lan nyin byed dbang po'i snang ba*, Lhasa edition, f. 28b–29a; sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, *'Byung rtsis kyi khog 'bug*, chapter 20 of the *Phu lugs rtsis kyi legs bshad mkhas pa'i mgul rgyan vaiḍūrya dkar po'i do shal*, Zhol edition, f. 150a.

[35] Cf. n. 40.

So in Tibet, ministers inform the king of the rumour and show their concern about the situation. They demand that Vairocana should be punished, but the king disagrees. Ngan Ta-ra klu-gong,[36] a minister, insists on the need for execution. The king contrives a way out. A beggar who physically resembles Vairocana is seized, disguised as Vairocana and then thrown into a river while Vairocana is told to hide himself in a hollow pillar of the palace. One night Queen dMar-rgyan discovers Vairocana and breaks the secrecy to the ministers (her motive for telling is Vairocana's refusal to comply with her love for him which becomes clear later on).[37] The king finds himself under pressure again and is forced to agree to his expulsion if not to his execution. Vairocana defends himself by singing several songs about the work which he has done for the sake of Tibet, the hardship that he undertook in going to India, and his acquisition of rare doctrines and knowledge, but to little avail. He then accuses the Queen of the intrigue despite her full knowledge of the fact that he for the sake of Tibet left his own parents and worked in India for so many years and that now he has the capacity for serving the people and country. She expresses her regret and begs him not to go away. However, Vairocana accepts Tsha-ba-rong as the place for his banishment saying that he was born there formerly and that the time has come to preach his doctrine there. The king asks him for advice as to what he should do with regard to Buddhism in the latter's absence. Vairocana tells him that Vimalamitra must be invited and then continue the work of translation of Buddhist works. Vairocana then departs for rGyal-mo Tsha-ba-rong.[38]

### *Chapter XII (f. 92a2–99b6)*

It deals mainly with the conversion of g.Yu-sgra snying-po. Vairocana arrives in Tsha-ba-rong, but is taken to be a spy (*rtog chen pa*) from Tibet.

[36] The famous minister in whose honour is erected the tall inscription in front of the Potala known as Zhol rDo-ring (Richardson 1952, pp. 1–34). He was the chief minister around the year 783. However, there are conflicting accounts of him in other sources, e.g. *BZh* (pp. 27, 30, 42) where a similar name is described as a champion of Bon as in the *'Dra 'bag* and then banished.

[37] The name of this queen, who belongs to the Tshe-spong clan, is rMa-rgyal ldong-skar in Tun-huang documents. She is the only wife who bore three sons to the king among the five wives. In the *bka' thang* literature, she is presented as a champion of Bon as in the case of *'Dra 'bag* and as concupiscent with regard to Vairocana. This theme, however, is absent in the *Zangs gling ma*, the earliest *bka' thang*, but much developed in *bTsun mo bka' thang* which in fact is borrowed from an episode of the Bonpo work, *gZer mig*. The latter in turn has taken over the theme of Potiphar's wife (Blondeau 1975–1976, p. 118; Kvaerne 1979, pp. 187–89).

[38] Apart from the causes which are apparent in our text for the expulsion, e.g. the calumny spread by the Indians, and the incurring of the queen's enmity, a certain tradition also attributes it to the myth of Vairocana's composition of the *Guyhagarbha* tantra (*NgD* p. 275).

He is thrown into a pit full of frogs, but he saves himself from it by explaining why he has to come to Tsha-ba-rong. Unconvinced by what he says, they throw him again into another pit, this time full of lice telling him that if there is no sign of attack from the Tibetans before seven weeks, he would be released. After the ultimatum, no sign of attack is reported and Vairocana is seen in the pit to be in good form. The people realise that he is no ordinary person. He then explains to them that he was formerly born in their royal family and was called sPur-na who became a monk. The members of the royal family are surprised by the fact that there was at one time a monk with the same name in the family. They now ask him to forgive them for all they have done to him. After a while Vairocana perceives the death of the king in Tibet.[39] He soon becomes a religious master of the royal family. A young prince called g.Yu-sgra snying-po is converted and Vairocana begins to teach him and others. Vairocana believes that the young prince is in fact the rebirth of his old companion, Legs-grub who was killed in India and so he is now considered by Vairocana to be perfectly suitable for receiving instructions in Atiyoga. However, Vairocana sets a number of conditions according to which g.Yu-sgra must defend his master under any circumstances and obey all orders from him. One of these is to go to Tibet and work for the master's return. g.Yu-sgra becomes his principal disciple in Tsha-ba-rong and receives all the teaching. He then withdraws into a retreat for five years which enables him to practise the teaching. Here ends chapter XII.

The rest of the text is not divided into chapters, and there is no mention of what this section is concerned with, but it takes up the topics of Vairocana's journey to China, g.Yu-sgra's travel to Tibet and back, and finally Vairocana's own return to Tibet. Here is a summary of the section:

> Vimalamitra is invited to Tibet from India as Vairocana had advised, but the king dies before Vimalamitra arrives in Tibet. He settles in bSam-yas. When Vairocana hears of his arrival, he sends g.Yu-sgra to Tibet to work with Vimalamitra (f. 100a–101a5).
>
> Vairocana then leaves for China where he meets 19 masters, two of them are nuns. He goes from one to another asking their views on Atiyoga. All of the Chinese masters have names in Sanskrit and not a single Chinese place name is given (f. 106a6–106b1).

This section on the journey to China is an independent work arbitrarily inserted into the text, a fact proved not only by its absence in other manuscript copies of the *'Dra 'bag* and in works which tell the same story, but also by its own epilogue: "Instructions of the scholars, siddhas, and

[39] According to *BZh* (p. 65), he was still active when Vimalamitra came to Tibet.

dākiṇīs. May this work be encountered by those who have extinguished their defilement and (wish) to end their saṃsāric lives!" The motive of the fabrication seems to be the desire to glorify Vairocana's life by the idea that it was not only in India that Vairocana met the masters of the doctrine, but also in China, and thus his accomplishment in obtaining all the instructions in the doctrine that existed. Moreover, what is implied by this piece is also the wish on the part of its author to indicate the possible existence of the doctrine in China and thus the connection between the doctrine and the Ch'an.

> Vairocana returns from China to Tsha-ba-rong and sees g.Yu-sgra (who in fact had already left for Tibet and has not yet returned) and gives him the instructions which he obtained from the Chinese masters (f. 106b1–107a5).

This is another insertion, because it simply does not fit in the sequence of the story.

> g.Yu-sgra arrives in bSam-yas. He is justly taken to be a foreigner (*mtha' mi*) and so has some difficulties in communication. He meets gNyags Jñānakumāra who invites him to his dwelling place and then hears all the news of Vairocana. gNyags immediately asks him for instructions in the doctrine. g.Yu-sgra then meets Vimalamitra, but the two foreign masters clash, each claiming to have some royal connection in their own countries. There ensues a debate and other contests between them, but finally they come to terms. Both masters then begin to teach (f. 107a5–111a5).
>
> Having restored the fame of Vairocana in Tibet again, g.Yu-sgra leaves Tibet for Tsha-ba-rong. On the way, he meets several Tibetans to whom he preaches and who later become famous masters of the Klong sde trend, like sBam Sangs-rgyas mgon-po. g.Yu-sgra arrives back in Tsha-ba-rong and Vairocana is pleased to see his loyal, industrious and courageous disciple who has successfully prepared for Vairocana's return to Tibet. Vairocana now envisages returning to his own country at last. But meanwhile Vimalamitra also requests the royal house to invite Vairocana back from Tsha-ba-rong. Three messengers are sent and they meet Vairocana, but he refuses to travel with them. He announces his return to the royal family and the people, who are reluctant to let him go. Vairocana promises them that he will come back once more and leaves his disciple sBam Sangs-rgyas mgon-po in his place to teach. Vairocana finally takes his leave with g.Yu-sgra. On the way, they come across sBam Mi-pham mgon-po who becomes a disciple of Vairocana. They arrive at bSam-yas at a time when the Tibetans are observing the mourning of the death of Mu-ne btsan-po, one of the sons of Queen dMar-rgyan. Vairocana is effusively welcomed by the royal family, ministers and the monks of bSam-yas (f. 111a6–118b2).
>
> Vairocana joins once again with the paṇḍitas and lo-tsā-ba in the work of translation in sGra-bsgyur-gling. He makes translations of various texts. In the translator's colophon of the sūtras he wrote his name as Ye-shes-sde; in the case of the tantras, Vairocana; in the case of Bon texts, Gan-jag thang-ta; in the case of texts on astrology, Indravairo; in the case of texts on medicine, Chos-'bar (f. 118b2–120b4).

This is simply a fancy, for Ye-shes-sde is well known as one of the greatest translators living towards the end of the eighth century. He is usually known as Zhang sNa-nam Ye-shes-de, belonging to the family of sNa-nam. Gan-jag thang-ta, as we have seen, is Vairocana's own lay name and no Bon texts are ever known to have existed with a colophon containing this name as a translator. On the other hand, some Bonpo texts do exist as translated works by Vairocana.[40] As for Indravairo and Chos-'bar, they seem to be pure fabrications. However, this claim has a persistent character as it occurs in several versions of Vairocana's life story contained in the *bka' thang* literature. *PK* seems to have been the first among the *bka' thang* to imply such a claim when it states that "Ye-shes-sde is the one who has many names" in a context where Vairocana is the central figure.[41]

> After staying for one year in the hermitage of mChims-phu, Vairocana again leaves for Tsha-ba-rong to see the people there as he promised. On the way back from there, he stops at Byams-chen in Kham for a while. Then he goes back to bSam-yas, but resides at the hermitage of mChims-phu (120b4–122a5).

The rest of the section of the text is devoted to his prophecies (f. 122b–125a). One of the names given in the prophecy is rDo-rje gling-pa, an extremely important eclectic figure in the development of the rDzogs chen thought in the fourteenth century. We shall have occasion to come back to him below. Just before the death of Vairocana his old hostess in Li, Tshul-khrims-sgron, comes to invite him to her country.[42] His seven disciples, such as sBam, g.Yu and gNyags beg him to narrate the story of his travels in India, his studies of Buddhism, especially the discovery of Atiyoga and its history in India, his promotion of Buddhism in Tibet

[40] E.g. *Theg pa rim pa mngon du bshad pa'i mdo rgyud*, Kalempong 1960, f. 8b2, Cf. Karmay 1972, p. 311, 1.22.

[41] The same account is also given in *bKa' thang gser phreng* (or *Pu ru'i bka' thang*), but further exaggerated by Padma gling-pa (1450–1221) in his *O rgyan padma 'byung gnas kyi 'khrungs rabs sangs rgyas bstan pa'i chos 'byung mun sel sgron me*, Delhi 1978, Vol. II, f. 4.

[42] As we have noted (n. 30) in several sources consulted, Vairocana does not pass through Li (Khotan)—geographically impossible anyway—when he returns to Tibet from India. This piece of the story does not fit in. It may have to do with the identification of Li with Nepal at one time. Also this last section of the *'Dra 'bag* is extremely confused (f. 125a3–127b5). *ChR* which quotes the *'Dra 'bag* textually (Vol. II, f. 22–201) does not mention Vairocana's passing through Li, but it does state, however, that he went finally to Li with the nun. The involvement of Li and the nun in the life story of Vairocana is curious. Is it a confusion or deliberate? I incline to think that it is the latter on the part of the author of the *'Dra 'bag*. The reason is that a monk with the same name, Vairocana, does occur in *Li yul chos kyi lo rgyus* although this monk has no connexion whatsoever with Ba-gor Vairocana, see *PT* 960 (R.E. Emmerick, *Tibetan texts concerning Khotan, London Oriental Series*, Vol. 19, London 1967, pp. 78–79).

and his missionary work in Tsha-ba-rong. The *'Dra 'bag* is then presented as Vairocana's oral response to the request of his seven disciples who wrote it down. It then explains the significance of the title: "as the reading of this work resembles to the seeing of the actual countenance of Vairocana, it is entitled the mask that resembles" (f. 125a3–125b6). Several other titles are also given, but the title *'Dra 'bag* is the one with which the work is usually known.

The summary which I have made is based on the xylographic edition of the work. Dharma seng-ge, the editor, has given in his editorial colophon, some interesting information with regard to the condition of the text and the circumstances in which he edited it. He specifies two different versions of the work. One was first hidden by a Zhang-gnas gsar-pa and later rediscovered by Jo-sman. This version according to the rNying ma pa tradition is *gter ma*, i.e. the transmission of the authorisation to use the text is interrupted by the process of concealment and recovery. The other version came to a 'Bro-ban bKra-shis 'byung-gnas who revised the text and this is according to the tradition is *bka' ma*, i.e. the authorisation has been transmitted from one person to another without having been interrupted. The editor has, however, not bothered to give any hint concerning the dates and identification of the persons mentioned above. The name Jo-sman, as I have suggested elsewhere, is identical to Jo-mo sman-mo (1248–1283), one of the wives of Guru Chos-dbang (1212–1270). According to Dharma seng-ge, the *bka' ma* version has been revised supplementing (*kha bkang ba*) it with passages from *PK*. The revision of 'Bro-ban of the *bka' ma* version is therefore posterior to O-rgyan gling-pa (1323–1374). He further states that the revision has caused disorder in the sequence of the story and many other defects. The *gter ma* version, he writes, is genuine (*shin tu yid ches pa'i gnas*) and moreover, contains a number of precepts (*zhal gdams*), but it is a version that the ordinary reader would find difficult to believe. The *bka' ma* version was therefore chosen to be engraved.[43] He also indicates the existence of the latter in three separate sections with titles, such as *rGya 'bag* for Vairocana's work in India, *Bod 'bag*, for his life in Tibet and *Tsha 'bag* for his sojourn in Tsha-ba-rong. The present edition, Dharma seng-ge says, is based on an earlier xylographic edition, but this old edition was not only written in a bad script, but also full of mis-spellings which obliged him to compare it

[43] The blocks were kept in bsTan-rgyas-gling in Lhasa where those of Dharma senge's own works in one volume were also kept (*sPar tho phyogs tsam bkod pa phan bde'i pad tshal 'byed pa'i nyin byed, Three Karchaks, Gedan sungrab minyam gyunphel* series, Vol. 13, Delhi 1970, p. 236). This edition was reproduced and published by Khochen Trulku, Dehra Dun, 1977.

with six different other manuscript copies. G. Tucci's charge, that Dharma seng-ge "wrote" it, is therefore singular to say the least.[44] However, there are things which are anomalous: first, the editor makes no remark regarding the section on Vairocana's trip to China; second, he has inserted his name Dharma sing-ha (f. 123a6) among the names figuring in the prophetical part purporting that he too is one of the emanations of Vairocana—a tendency, characteristic of the rNying ma pa and Bonpo.

Dharma seng-ge lived around the end of the nineteenth century. Judging from his comments in the editorial colophon, he was a very keen critic, a rare quality for such a fervent Buddhist as he was. He usually describes himself as the "Madman from Kham" (*khams smyon*). Being aware of all the defects and contradictions still inherent in the work, he is obviously not satisfied with his editorial work and he pleads to future learned readers to examine it carefully (f. 129a5–130a5).

Here some words must be said with regard to the method which I have adopted in summarising this work. In spite of Dharma seng-ge's statement that the present text is the *bka' ma* version, it contains two or even more different versions of one episode in juxtaposition in many places, for example, chapter III is largely an overlapping part of chapter I, the account of the twenty-three masters in chapter V is divided into different lineages which suggest the existence of different versions, two different versions concerning the parents of the boy Gan-jag thang-ta. In these cases, I have only indicated the existence of the different versions, but not summarised them. The work also contains long sections of mystical songs and a number of verses, in which the dialogues between two people are mostly written, have not been summarised. In short, the summary has made an attempt to keep to the main points in the sequence of the story and not to diverge when other subjects arise in the text.

The *'Dra 'bag* is claimed not only as a hagiographical account of Vairocana, but also as a history of rDzogs chen in general. However, historicity cannot be attested in any connection whether when it is about people (other than the Tibetan kings and ministers) or places (particularly in India). There is great uncertainty whether Dhahena was really a place name, if so it is not evident whether it was in India or in Oḍḍiyāna. As hagiography, it is naturally written within the framework of Buddhist doctrinal structure and ideology. The characters who have a major role to play are all predestined. Khri Srong-lde-btsan knows the existence of Atiyoga in India through the fact that he was formerly born there as a monk practising the doctrine. Vairocana formerly was Ānanda hence

[44] *MBT* II, p. 114, n. 1.

his work in general for promoting Buddhism and particularly his conversion of the barbaric people of Tsha-ba-rong to Buddhism. He does this, because he was also formerly born in the royal family of that country. Legs-grub, having accompanied Vairocana to India, leaves for Tibet alone and is killed on the way so that he would be born in Tsha-ba-rong as g.Yu-sgra snying-po in order to assist Vairocana in his missionary work there.

The inevitable question then arises whether there is any historicity behind all these legends of Vairocana. In a field such as Tibetan Buddhist studies one can only talk in terms of textual evidence in such a case as this. It is therefore a matter of tracing back in time to see from what periods the texts talk about Vairocana. The *'Dra 'bag* is quoted at length in *ChR* completed in 1362.[45] The version it contains is identical with the xylographic edition excepting the section on Vairocana's trip in China which is absent there.

The next source which is older and deals with the life story of Vairocana is *MNy* by Nyang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zer (1136–1204). In this work, the *'Dra 'bag* is mentioned neither in the section devoted to the story nor in the epilogue where the author gives a bibliographic list of the historical works which he consulted for his extremely important historical work. However, the story, although told in a very condensed form, is essentially the same as that of the *'Dra 'bag*. We have already noted the minor differences. It seems therefore that the elaboration of the *'Dra 'bag*, particularly its early parts, dates from the late thirteenth century and certainly existed in its present form before 1362.

The next historical work which gives an important place to Vairocana—one of the earliest but post tenth century work—is the well known *BZh*. Certain authors have recently ascribed it as late as to the fourteenth century,[46] but it is difficult to reconcile this to the fact that we know that Sa-pan Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (1181–1282) mentions it by title[47] and Nyang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zer (1136–1204) incorporated a long section of it in his *MNy*.[48] In *BZh*, Vairocana is specifically mentioned by his father's

[45] In the colophon of the new edition of this work, a note identifies the author rGyal-sras Thugs-mchog-rtsal with Klong-chen rab-'byams. I pointed out the contradictions which emerge in the dates if we accept the identification (Karmay 1981, p. 200, n. 30). It is now certain that rGyal-sras Thugs mchog-rtsal is not identical with Klong-chen rab-'byams. The Vth Dalai Lama, for example, treats them as different authors (*GCh*, Vol. 4, p. 409).

[46] Imaeda 1975, p. 126.

[47] *sKyes bu dam pa rnams la springs pa'i yi ge, Sa skya bka' 'bum*, Vol. 5, No. 830, p. 332–1–4: *rgyal bzhed, dpal (sBa) bzhed 'bangs bzhed . . ./*

[48] Although Nyang-ral does not acknowledge the fact that he has borrowed a long section of *BZh*, the section in question can be traced to *BZh* (*MNy* f. 462, 1.5–526, 13; *BZh* pp. 53, 1.9–86, 1.5).

name Ba-gor He-dod and is described as one of the first Tibetans who became Buddhist monks and later participated on the Indian side in the great Buddhist controversy which raged between Indian and Chinese parties in Tibet in the latter half of the eighth century. Further on it is stated that Padmasambhava, after staying for a while, is forced to leave Tibet, but before he took his departure he expounded *MTPh* to his followers. Moreover, it is said, that Padmasambhava left Tibet without being able to finish his teaching so that Khri Srong-lde-brsan was not satisfied with this state of affairs.[49] He then sent Vairocana and his companion Legs-grub to India in search of the unfinished teaching. However, they came back without any Indian paṇḍitas and due to calumny spread by the Indians, Vairocana was banished to Tsha-ba-rong. Vimalamitra, it continues, was then invited to Tibet and Khri Srong-lde-btsan obtained from him the instructions which Padmasambhava had to leave unfinished.[50] Although this story is rather reticent concerning the identification of the teaching, it nevertheless gives the impression that it is connected with *MTPh* and that Padmasambhava left Tibet without being able to complete its exposition of which we shall have more to say later on.[51]

*SM* whose composition belongs probably to the tenth century mentions Vairocana three times, but each time in an interlinear note.[52] As the name is mentioned in connexion with the rDzogs chen doctrines, it undoubtedly refers to Ba-gor Vairocana. However, the earliest document which attests the name is *PT* 44. This Tun-huang document certainly belongs to no later than the ninth century. In this document, it is stated that Vairocana participated in the invocation ritual of the divinity Phur pa with Padmasambhava and some other adepts in the cave of Brag-dmar, near bSam-yas. This attestation indeed justifies the claim of the later rNy-ing ma pa tradition according to which Vairocana was a disciple of Padmasambhava. The cave is more often known as Brag-dmar mChims-phu. Brag-dmar is the birth place of the king Khri Srong-lde-btsan.

Another Tun-huang document, *PT* 7311, which is a fragment of the *prajñāpāramitā* texts, has a complete translation colophon. It runs: "the Indian upādhyāya Śīlendrabodhi, Śākyaprabhā and Vairocana made revisions (of this text)". This is almost exactly identical to another one at

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[49] Here *MNy* (f. 478, 1.5) has a totally different wording in the same context: *de nas btsan pos snga 'gyur dag par byed pa'i 'phro lus pa la thugs ma tshims nas paṇḍita mkhas pa tshol bar bya dgongs pa dang . . ./*—"There the king was not satisfied with the incomplete revision of the earlier translations and was thinking of inviting another paṇḍita . . .".

[50] Cf. *BZh* pp. 26, 64–65; according to *'Dra 'bag,* the king died before Vimalamitra's arrival, cf. p. 28.

[51] Pp. 143–44; Cf. also n. 13.

[52] Pp. 315, 328, 416.

the end of a text in the *bsTan-'gyur* where the only difference is that Vairocana's name is preceded by the official title Zhu chen gyi lo-tsā-ba and that the name is extended by the syllables *rakṣita*. These colophons no doubt refer to Ba-gor Vairocana as a translator.[53] Granted that Vairocana was a great translator as the tradition maintains, one would expect to find his name in the ancient catalogues of the *bKa'-'gyur*, such as *TD*, but it is mentioned only once.[54] It is reported that his name occurs in the *'Phang thang ma* which however at present cannot be verified.[55] Nevertheless, a large number of tantras are said to have been translated by him and these are collected together known as *Vairo rgyud 'bum*[56] which is largely an overlapping of certain parts of the collection of *NyG*.

### *Vairocana in the Bonpo tradition*

The character with which Vairocana is presented in the Bonpo historical tradition is somewhat different from the Buddhist. The Tibetan historical tradition maintains that in the eighth century, Bon as a native faith saw Buddhism as a new and foreign religion implanted into the country and soon adopted as the state religion with the foundation of bSam-yas. The ensuing clash between the Bonpo and Buddhists obliged the then Bonpo leading master Dran-pa nam-mkha' to consent to adopt the Buddhist faith. During his abjuration he co-operated with the Buddhists to establish the new religion. This presentation of Dran-pa nam-mkha' therefore exemplifies an approach to different religions in a spirit of impartiality. Hence an idea of eclectic practice is born with him at least from the twelfth century in Bonpo historical works. However, the real motive of his acceptance of the Buddhist doctrine is, it is said, to save the Bonpo religious works from destruction at the hands of the persecutors. Vairocana originally was, according to this tradition, a Bonpo and called Ba-gor g.Yung-drung-gsas. Later he became a Buddhist and was also a disciple of Dran-pa nam-mkha' from whom he inherited the eclectic spirit in his religious practices. He joined his Bonpo master and other priests in concealing Bonpo texts.[57] In certain Bonpo works, it is stated that Dran-pa nam-

[53] Other Tun-huang documents also show Vairocana as a translator: *PT* 1582, 1583. According to Bu-ston six different translations of the longest version of the *Prajñāpāramitā* existed, and one of them was made by Vairocana (*DS* p. 923) and Bu-ston also gives several works which are attributed to Vairocana (*DS* pp. 924, 1045, 1046, 1054).

[54] Lalou 1953, p. 335 (671).

[55] *GLZ* p. 781.

[56] See Bibliography.

[57] Cf. *Sources for a history of Bon*, text No. 1, p. 44; *Legs bshad mdzod* (Karmay 1972, pp. 151–52, 160, 181).

mkha' himself revised certain Bonpo works making them conform to Buddhist theories and then preached them to Vairocana who thus embraced both faiths.[58] The name Vairocana is therefore in this work often preceded by the phrase the "non-differentiator between Bon and Buddhism" (*bon chos khyad med*). This tradition of the eclectic character of Vairocana was originally unique to the Bonpo tradition. However, it was taken over by the Buddhists who have then much amplified it. Twenty-four out of forty-seven *gter-ston* given in *PK* are considered to be rebirths of Vairocana and most of them have a direct connexion with Bon[59] notwithstanding the pronounced antipathy of *PK* to Bon. This eclectic trait particularly manifests in rDo-rje gling-pa who believed himself a rebirth of Vairocana and produced certain Bonpo rDzogs chen works.[60] He made a considerable contribution in promoting the impartial spirit of later centuries, particularly in the Eclectic Movement.

Vairocana's emanations, however, are by no means confined to the number of *gter ston* mentioned in *PK*. Some Bonpo *gter ston* and other masters are equally considered as emanations of him.[61] His reappearances in embodying *gter ston* and other great teachers cover the space of nine centuries from the eleventh to the nineteenth centuries.

On the occasion of each of the two great rNying ma pa renaissances, Vairocana plays a key role. He incarnates in the person of gTer-bdag gling-pa (1646–1714) in reviving the rNying ma pa school through the foundation of the monastery of sMin-grol-gling in 1676 and g.Yu-sgra, his chief disciple, now also reappears as the younger brother of gTer-bdag gling-pa, Lo-chen Dharmaśrī (1654–1717) whose cooperation with his elder brother is no less important. It is, however, in his embodiment in the person of Kong-sprul Yon-tan rgya-mtsho (1811–1899) that the eclectic character of the Bonpo tradition most strikingly emerges. Kong-sprul was a Bonpo by birth and education in his early age, but later he became a proselyte of the Buddhist faith with the adoption of the name bsTan-gnyis g.yung-drung gling-pa which signifies his embrace of both the doctrines. It is not simply by chance that Vairocana's former Indian masters, 'Jam-dpal bshes-gnyen and Vimalamitra now concurrently reincarnate in the person of 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse (1820–1892),[62] for

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[58] *Srid pa rgyud kyi kha byang chen mo* by Khod-po Blo-gros thogs-med (b. 1280), Dolanji 1976, p. 259; *sPyi rgyud ye khri mtha' sel gyi lo rgyus chen mo skos kyi mchong*, p. 775: *bon chos phyogs med.*
[59] *TTGL* pp. 101–245.
[60] Cf. p. 216, et seq.
[61] *Legs bshad mdzod* (Karmay 1972, p. 152); *Sources for a history of Bon*, No. 4, pp. 96, 98; No. 5, p. 111.
[62] *TTGL* p. 449.

it is this master who lends his spiritual guidance to Kong-sprul in carrying out the Eclectic Movement. The revelation of the existence and history of this movement which is now well known is due to the studies of E.G. Smith.[63] If 'Jam-dbyangs mkhyen-brtse has written a biography of Padmasambhava according to the Bonpo tradition in which Padmasambhava is a son of Dran-pa nam-mkha' and the twin brother of Tshe-dbang rig-'dzin, and adopting a Bonpo name, Mi-shigs g.yung-drung 'byung-gnas,[64] it is because of the circumstances in which his illustrious disciple, Kong-sprul, is now the embodiment of Vairocana and both the master and disciple were in the process of endeavouring to establish the Ris-med Movement.[65]

If Vairocana's role is of special importance in spiritual life, he is very rarely represented either in the form of an image or in painting compared to other religious figures in Tibet.[66]

There does not seem to be any doubt that Vairocana had a real existence and that he was a lo-tsā-ba living in the latter part of the eighth century. However, the existence of the Tun-huang manuscript version of the *Rig pa'i khu byug*,[67] the first of the eighteen Sems sde texts which do not bear Vairocana's name cautions us not to take too seriously the traditional account of Vairocana being the translator of the "Five early translations". On the other hand, Vairocana's association with rDzogs chen is nevertheless attested in works, like *SM*, and therefore goes back to the tenth century. However, Professor Tucci's suggestion that Vairocana was in all probability a follower of the Ch'an, but that the orthodoxy had covered it up, remains highly hypothetical.[68]

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[63] Introduction to *Kongtrul's Encyclopaedia of Indo-Tibetan culture*, Delhi 1970, pp. 1–78.

[64] For a most lucid and revealing study of the biography, see Blondeau 1985.

[65] 'Ju Mi-pham rnam-rgyal (1846–1912), the prominent disciple of Kong-sprul and so closely connected with the movement also has a Bonpo name, Mi-shigs g.yung-drung 'od-dkar and has composed several Bonpo works, such as the *Srid-pa 'phrul gyi ju thig gi dpyad don snang gsal sgron me* (Derge edition, 407 folios).

[66] Two images of him are reported to have existed in bSam-yas, *bSam yas dkar chag, SPS* Vol. 14, pp. 128, 140.

[67] See pp. 56–59.

[68] *MBT* II, pp. 110–115.

# PART TWO

CHAPTER TWO

# THE ANCIENT DOCUMENTS ON RDZOGS CHEN FROM TUN-HUANG

Among the Tun-huang Tibetan manuscripts of Sir Aurel Stein preserved in the India Office Library in London, I was able in 1973 to discover three works relevant to rDzogs chen. Two of them are texts which one might call prototypes of the later literature of the rDzogs chen tradition. The third one is merely a list of different successions of religious masters including some of the rDzogs chen tradition in three different places in Tibet in the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. I used these works as sources for my lectures on rDzogs chen at the Sorbonne in 1973 and 74.[1] The existence of these manuscripts has not previously been noted by any of the Tibetologists writing on the rNying ma pa in general or on rDzogs chen in particular.[2]

Fortunately, unlike many of the Tun-huang manuscripts, these are complete and sufficiently clear so that there is no difficulty in reading them. In the catalogue of de la Vallée-Poussin, the manuscripts bear the following numbers: 594, 647 and 689/2 respectively.[3]

## Tun-huang document No. I (IOL 647)

*IOL* 647 will be treated here at first since it contains one of the fundamental texts of the rDzogs chen tradition. It consists of five folios in the ordinary Tibetan format. Each of the folios has six lines from left to right and the folios are paginated in the usual way from 1*a* to 5*b*. Folio 1*b*, however, does not contain any part of the actual work, but a list of teachings associated with *prajñāpāramitā*.[4] It is scribed in an obviously different hand from the rest of the manuscript. In spite of this textual interpolation, the text is continuous from folio 1*a* to 2*a* judged in the light of the grammatical structure and also from the point of view of the subject-

[1] "Problèmes historiques et doctrinaux de la philosophie du rJogs-čhen", *Annuaires E.P.H.E.* 1973–74 (Tome 82), pp. 53–57. The third manuscript (*IOL* 689/2) was already published by F.W. Thomas, *Tibetan Literary Texts Concerning Chinese Turkestan*, Part I (London 1935), pp. 85–87.

[2] E.g. Tucci, *MBT* II, pp. 102–54; 1973, pp. 117–25.

[3] Louis de la Vallée-Poussin, *Catalogue of the Tibetan manuscripts from Tun-huang in India Office Library*, London 1962.

[4] See the Tun-huang documents reproduced at the end of this book.

matter. I have found no other copy of the same work for comparison. The insertion of the list of the *prajñāpāramitā* teaching which is totally extraneous to the doctrines of rDzogs chen, cannot therefore be explained in the present condition of the manuscript. The style of the manuscript is the *'bru ma* script. It is the early style of this script later very popular in certain regions of Kham, e.g. Khyung po and of Amdo, e.g. Zung chu. The Bonpo ritual works in these regions are often written in this form of the script. The folios are made of two sheets of paper stuck together with horizontal lines in the centre and vertical lines on the margin on the right and left-hand sides. The script itself is all in black ink. Like the early Buddhist manuscripts, to hold them together, each of the folios has two round marks in the centre on either side, but they have not been pierced through.

The manuscript in fact contains two works: a basic text (*rtsa ba*) and a commentary (*'grel ba*) though no such terms are used in the works themselves. For convenience, let us call the first part the basic text which in fact consists of only six verses plus the words of salutation at the beginning. Neither the title of the text nor the name of the author are given. The second part of the manuscript begins on folio 1*a*, line 4 and is continuous right through excepting the textual interpolation which has already been noted. It finishes on folio 5*a*, line 6. The folio 5*b* contains certain mantras almost illegible and bears no relation to the texts. Undoubtedly the manuscript belongs to the genre of commentary on a basic text, but the commentator preferred not or overlooked to mention the name of the author of the basic text and that of his own.

## *The basic text*

Although the commentary does not explicitly mention any title for this basic text as such, it gives three indications in the following way: the "Cuckoo of Intellect" is the example, the "Ornament of the appearance which brings one to realisation"[5] is the meaning, the "Six vajra words" are the number (*rig pa'i khu byug ni dpe/ rig byed snang ba'i rgyan ni don/ rdo rje tshig drug ni grangs/*). These are in fact the titles of the basic text, a fact confirmed by another indication in the same commentary: "keep in mind the principle of the 'Cuckoo of intellect' " (*rig pa'i khu byug gi don yid la brnag par bya'o/*).[6] It is quite common among the rDzogs chen texts to have several titles for one work, but more often just two. While one con-

[5] It is under this title that the work is referred to in the *Chos nyid byang chub kyi sems bkra shis mi 'gyur gsal ba gnas pa'i rgyud, NyG* (Kaneko No. 17, f. 595).
[6] See pp. 55, 58, 5a *l.* 1.

tains a simile (*dpe*) another conveys the actual subject (*don*) of the work. It is also the case with the manuscript *IOL* 594[7] which will be discussed later. In the present case, *Rig pa'i khu byug* is the title of the basic text containing the simile whereas *Rig byed snang ba'i rgyan* is the real title. However, in *KhT* another commentary of the text, a further elaboration has been made concerning the titles. According to this, there are three titles: *Byang chub sems* given from the viewpoint of the subject (*don las btags pa*), *Sa gcig pa*[8] or *Rig byed snang ba'i rgyan* given from the viewpoint of the quality (*che ba las btags pa*), *Khu byug* as the simile (*dpe las mtshan du btags pa*).[9]

The basic text also forms as the thirty-first chapter of *KG* under the title *rDo rje tshig drug*, but with the title *Rig pa'i khu byug*, it occurs as the first text of the group of the eighteen Sems sde texts which we have already met.[10] The significance of the metaphor in the title, the Cuckoo is not explained in the commentary, but the fact that the basic text was known by this title before the eleventh century A.D. is well attested by the quotations from it in *SM*. There it is quoted twice mentioning simply *Khu byug*.[11]

However, according to *KhT* there are four kinds of significance in the metaphor: "as the cuckoo comes from India (i.e. from the south) to Tibet either on the 8th or 28th of the first summer month, so those who take up the practice of rDzogs chen are either very intelligent but not learned or those who are very learned; as the cuckoo's singing gives pleasure so does the teaching of rDzogs chen to its adepts; when the cuckoo comes, plants and trees grow, helping the animals to nourish themselves, when one hears the teaching of rDzogs chen, it causes one to attain realisation; as the singing of the cuckoo overpowers other birds so is the teaching of rDzogs chen superior to all other teachings."[12] Similar explanations are also given in *TY*[13] and *Vairo 'dra 'bag*.[14]

The role of this bird in Bonpo tradition is very important. Above all, it is a sacred bird for the simple reason that the Bon Master gShen-rab mi-bo is thought to have come down to earth from heaven in the form of this bird,[15] hence also the importance of the blue colour for the Bonpo.

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[7] See p. 60.
[8] See p. 47, n. 26.
[9] *KhT* p. 342.
[10] See p. 23.
[11] pp. 323, 347.
[12] pp. 342–45.
[13] p. 10.
[14] lHa sa Edition, f. 62a, *l.* 6. On this text, see p. 18 et seq.
[15] *'Dus pa rin po che'i rgyud dri ma med ma gzi brjid rab tu 'bar ba'i mdo*, Delhi 1965, Vol. Ka, chapter 4, *sKye ba bzhes pa*, f. 7a3 (567), 1975.

In the Bonpo rDzogs chen tradition, there are nine imaginary sages through whom the teachings of rDzogs chen are considered to have been transmitted, not by means of verbal communication, but rather telepathically (*dgongs brgyud*). The sixth of the nine beings is called Bar-snang khu-byug, the "Cuckoo of the space".[16] The second of the nine Bonpo rDzogs chen texts known as *Sems sde dgu* is also entitled *Rig pa'i khu byug*,[17] and according to *Gab pa dgu bskor*, it was first taught in the following way: "Ye-gshen gtsug-phud[18] transformed himself into a cuckoo on a juniper tree[19] and sang clearly the 'Cuckoo of Intellect', the Enlightened Mind" (*ye gshen gtsug phud kyis/ g.yu lo 'bar ba'i sdong po'i steng du/ 'dab chags khu byug tu sprul nas/ gsung lhang lhang snyan par bsgrags pa'i don/ byang chub sems rig pa khu byug ces bya'o/*).[20] This cuckoo is evidently identical to the sage Bar-snang khu-byug mentioned above. However, the Bonpo text of the same title is at present not available for comparative research, therefore its origin remains unknown. However, from the few lines quoted in *BS*[21] the two texts do not seem to be identical, but on the other hand, it could hardly have been simply coincidental that they have such an identical title. As the Tun-huang text undoubtedly dates back to the ninth century A.D. if not eighth century, the Bonpo must have borrowed it from this version, probably around the eleventh century A.D. but as is often the case, the Bonpo explanation of the metaphor of the title is more fitting than the confused Buddhist ones.

In another Bonpo work entitled *'Grel bzhi rig pa'i rgya mtsho*, the Intellect (*rig pa*) is compared to a cuckoo and it states that the doctrine of rDzogs chen must be expounded in five different ways and each of the ways is compared to the quality of one animal: the soaring of a *garuḍa* (*khyung chen lding ba*), the leap of a lion (*seng ge'i mchong stabs*), the walk of a swan (*ngang mo'i 'gros*), the song of a cuckoo (*khu byug gsung*), and the drawing in of a tortoise (*rus sbal gyi bskum thabs*). The metaphor of the cuckoo is explained in the following words: "for example, the cuckoo, king of the birds, comes in between winter and summer and when it sings most distinctly to

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[16] sPa bsTan-rgyal bzang-po, *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan brgyud kyi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* (composed in 1419), *ZhNy* Ka, pp. 10–11.

[17] Karmay 1972, p. 51.

[18] According to *BK* 'Chi-med gtsug-phud another name of Ye-gshen gtsug-phud, who is a Bonpo sage, classified the Bon texts that descended from heaven into 9 or 27 groups (f. 46a: *bon gnam babs rgyu 'bras mi bslu zhes/ ston pa 'chi med gtsug phud kyis/ khu byug dgu 'am nyi shu bdun du dbye/*). However, such classification under the term *khu byug* is not known to the Bonpo tradition itself. On the other hand, among the Bonpo scholars, the identification of the "Cuckoo in space" is a popular topic for discussion, Cf. Shar-rdza bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan, *Legs bshad mdzod* (Karmay 1972, pp. 57–58).

[19] *g.yu lo 'bar ba* is an epithet of juniper, the sacred tree of the Bonpo.

[20] Edition Delhi (c. 1966), f. 35a.

[21] The quotations come from a *Khu byug rang 'grel* "autocommentary", f. 21a, 23a.

announce the coming of the summer season, it pleases living beings. In the same way this teaching, if propagated . . . gives the pleasure to the enlightened Intellect" (*dper na bya rje khu byug bya ba des/ dbyar dgun gyi mtshams su 'ongs nas/ skad lhang lhang sgrags pas/ sems can thams cad spro ba bskyed pa bzhin du/ gsung 'dis kyang . . . rig pa byang chub kyi sems la/ sems kyi spro ba bskyed pa'o/*).[22]

It is therefore evident that the cuckoo has two functions: one is as the Master of the Intellect (*Rig pa'i ston pa*) who is in the form of the bird, hence the name Bar-snang khu-byug and the text which contains the teaching transmitted through him bearing the title *Khu byug*. In this sense, the bird itself has the position of a sage. On the other hand, in the second case, it is taken simply as a simile like the ones in the Buddhist texts mentioned above. Just as the cuckoo announces the coming of the summer season so does the teaching of rDzogs chen which awakens the dormant *rig pa byang chub kyi sems* in all living beings.

However, it is no less important to note also that in other Buddhist traditions, Rig-pa'i khu-byug (Vidyākokila) is the name of an Indian personage appearing in a lineage through which the practice of the *bodhicit-totpādasamaya* is transmitted reaching ultimately Atiśa, but nothing much is known of this master.[23] The practice of *bodhicitta* here is a question of a vow in which one is moved by an infinite compassion towards all living beings and so resolves to lead them to salvation. Once this determination is produced in thought, the adept is then qualified to be considered as Bodhisattva in the tradition of the *abhisamayālaṃkāra* teachings. However, *bodhicitta* in rDzogs chen tradition is already existent in all living beings from the very beginning. On this topic we shall come back in another chapter. There is no known source that gives the slightest clue to this mysterious link between the title of our rDzogs chen text and the name of the Indian master connected with the tradition of the *bodhicitta* vow. This master does not seem to have anything to do with rDzogs chen. On the other hand, the term *bodhicitta* as in other Buddhist teachings plays an important role in rDzogs chen as the Primordial Basis. It is therefore quite probable that there was a connexion between them at a certain stage in the development of the rDzgos chen doctrine, but how this came about remains unresolved in the light of present research.

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[22] *Byang sems gab pa dgu bskor gyi dgongs pa bkral ba'i 'grel bzhi rig pa'i rgya mtsho* (Karmay 1977, No. 73. text 5, p. 202). Cf. also *sPyi rgyud ye khri mtha' sel gyi lo rgyus chen mo skos kyi mchong*, p. 796.

[23] *Jo bo rje dpal ldan mar me mdzad ye shes kyi rnam thar rgyas pa*, Varanasi 1970, pp. 19–21. In his *BT*, Ngag-dbang chos-grags states that there are two Indian teachers known as Rig-pa'i khu-byug (*che chung gnyis*) and further states that no works of these masters ever existed (f. 207).

*The commentary*

There are in fact at least three works which could be classified as commentaries of the basic text. Besides the one attached to the basic text in our Tun-huang manuscript, two can be found in *Vairo rgyud 'bum: TY* and *KhT. TY* is a commentary fairly close to the text which it purports to elucidate, but unfortunately incomplete. On the other hand, in *KhT* the verses are commented upon in a scholastic style so that the distance is very great between the verse and the explanations offered. However, none, including the Tun-huang manuscript, gives any name as its author. The commentary in the Tun-huang document is obviously the oldest. We shall therefore concentrate on this and then note down when the others differ on important points. It begins with the question why the name Kun-tu bzang-po has been given here rather than Vajrasattva who according to all tantras is the "Chief of all yogas" (*rnal 'byor kun gyi gtso bo*). The answer to the question is that when it is about striving towards a goal and when there are different grades as to the goal that one obtains, Vajrasattva is mentioned, but that with rDzogs chen doctrines one pursues nothing of the kind. Therefore Kun-tu bzang-po is preferred. It must be pointed out at the outset that this Kun-tu bzang-po has a quite different role from that of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra who occurs frequently in sūtras. In both the rNying ma pa and Bonpo traditions *dharmakāya* is generally represented by him in the system of the three-fold "Buddha body". In rDzogs chen, Kun-tu bzang-po is merely a synonym of *rig pa byang chub kyi sems*.

After having dwelt upon the salutatory part, the commentary begins to deal with the actual basic text. It tries to elucidate the text verse by verse, but nevertheless this results in obscurity to the extent that any effort to make sense out of it is almost bound to be arbitrary. But then it is evident that the commentary itself embodies interpretations which are often further from the point than one might expect. Many elements of different origins are brought in to explain the doctrines. Thus there are the tantric elements such as the concepts of "deliverance" (*sgrol ba*) and "sexual union" (*sbyor ba*) which make up the four "vows" (*tha tshig rnam bzhi*). These two here stand for the first two categories of the four basic rules of the Vinaya (*rtsa ba bzhi*), *viz.* killing (*srog gcod pa*) and fornication (*mi tshangs bar spyod pa*). The remaining two elements of the four "vows" are identical to those of the Vinaya. However, from the standpoint of rDzogs chen system, it is considered that no acceptance or rejection can have a place in rDzogs chen, for the four "vows" are "intrinsically embodied" (*lhun gyis grub pa nyid du gnas pa*) in the *byang chub kyi sems*. The other tantric elements are the five kinds of passions termed here as *mi spang ba'i dam*

*tshig*, the "vows concerning that which is not to be rejected". The author of the commentary states that there are various teachings which are only "intentional". They do not teach the truth fully. The only doctrine that embodies the truth is the doctrine of rDzogs chen, but at the same time that doctrine has never been pronounced, for the "theory and practice of Kun-tu bzang-po are already inborn in all living beings" (*kun tu bzang po'i lta spyod ni/ 'gro ba kun la zin pa'i chos nyid yin/*. Finally the commentary finishes by emphasising spontaneity in relation to the three tantric elements, viz. "achievement" (*dngos grub*), "vows" (*dam tshig*) and "rituals" (*mchod sbyin*).

*Identification of the basic text*

As already mentioned, this basic text constitutes as the thirty-first chapter of *KG* under the title *rDo rje tshig drug*. In this work, it is presented as follows: "then, the mind that is enlightened, the king who creates all, pronounced his own nature which is the spontaneity of complete non-action. Oh! listen, the Great Being" (*de nas byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po des/ kun byed nyid kyi rang bzhin bya med rdzogs pa lhun gyis grub pa 'di gsungs so/ kye sems dpa' chen po nyon cig/*. At this point the text of the *rDo rje tshig drug* begins and ends with the following words: "so he said. The six *vajra* words, the thirty-first chapter of the *Byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po*".[24]

The basic text is also presented as the first work of the group of the eighteen texts of Sems sde.[25] In this group it purports to have been a translation from Sanskrit as also in the case *of KG* with the title *Santidarpa* and in Tibetan *rDzogs pa chen po sa gcig pa*, the Great Perfection, the "single stage",[26] but they hardly correspond to each other. Apart from a few variants in the orthography, the text is exactly the same as the other contained in *KG* and the Tun-huang manuscript. It finishes: "the end of the Cuckoo of Intellect, the Enlightened Mind" (*Byang chub kyi sems rig pa khu byug rdzogs so/*).[27]

The basic text contains the original germ of the fundamental ideas of

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[24] *KG* f. 96–97. For further discussion on this work, see p. 207.

[25] On this group of texts, see p. 23.

[26] *santi* is usually given as the Sanskrit equivalent for *rdzogs chen* though no such Sanskrit term is readily definable. Nor is it clear the term *darpa* which may be a corruption of *dhar* or *dharā*, earth (?). However, rDzogs chen doctrine is known as *sa gcig pa* as it occurs in another text: *rdzogs pa chen po sa gcig pa/ gang gi(s) de rtog(s) de yi sa/*—"the Great Perfection is the single state. He who realises it, he is at that stage" (*Chos thams cad byang chub kyi sems rdzogs pa chen po 'khor ba rtsad nas gcod pa nam mkha' dang mnyam par yi ge med pa'i rgyud*, Kaneko No. 4, f. 375). Cf. also *Thig le kun gsal chen po'i rgyud*, Kaneko No. 81, f. 238).

[27] Kaneko No. 8, f. 419.

what we may call the rDzogs chen theories. It also serves as the basic structure on which later texts are built, expanded and elaborated. In the certain cases, it has been entirely incorporated, for example, in *KG* as we have already noted. But in the *Byang chub sems kyi mdo 'grel chen po bcu*, the six verses have been expanded into many more lines.[28] In another work, they are split up and put into different parts of the work in order to fit in different contexts, e.g. *bKra shis pa'i rig pa'i khu byug gi rgyud*.[29] In yet another tantra entitled *rDzogs pa chen po chos nyid byang chub sems bkra shis mi 'gyur gsal bar gnas pa'i rgyud*, the six verses suddenly appear at the end of its chapter 8 where they are used to exalt the rDzogs chen doctrine. They are preceded by the following lines:

> "Sublime and free from striving,
> The best of Buddha-vehicles,
> The secret aim of triumphant yogins."
> (*bla med rtsol ba las 'das pa'i/*
> *sangs rgyas kun gyi theg pa'i mchog/*
> *rnal 'byor dbang phyug dgongs pa'i don/*).[30]

The last verses in particular are used more often than the other ones. They recur again and again either with a slight change in the wording or incorporated totally without any kind of indication of their source.[31] It is this basic text which is quoted in *SM* as one of its primary sources under the title *Khu byug*.[32] In his *ThCh*, Rong-zom Chos-kyi bzang-po also has taken these lines as the fundamental work of rDzogs chen under the title of *Byang chub kyi sems rdo rje tshig drug pa* on whose axis revolves his important treatise on rDzogs chen. Rong-zom Paṇḍita analyses the six verses as follows: "the first two lines indicate the 'deviation' (*gol ba*), the next two lines display the greatness of the Enlightened Mind which is the permanent presence of Kun-tu bzang-po and finally the last two are concerned with the state of equanimity and spontaneity".[33] By comparison, this analysis is no clearer than the one in the commentary which we have already seen. Nonetheless, it is evident that this basic text embodies the principal tenets of rDzogs chen, such as the idea of "singleness" or "oneness" suggesting that no other teachings and methods of teaching are more effective and valid than this. The implication is that other systems

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[28] Kaneko No. 2, f. 305. This text has no colophon and so its origin is uncertain. At any rate, the lines are quoted below.

[29] Kaneko No. 16, f. 529. It is said to be a translation of Vairocana.

[30] Kaneko No. 17, f. 599. This text is said to be a translation of g.Yu-sgra snying-po. On this personage, see p. 27 et seq.

[31] E.g. *Ye shes gsang ba'i sgron me* (Kaneko No. 58, f. 9).

[32] Pp. 323–347.

[33] f. 210.

of teaching are a deviation (*gol ba*). The rDzogs chen approach is therefore described in many terms intended in this sense, for example, *gcig chod* ("enough by itself"), *gcig thub* ("the only one which enables"), and *gcig grol* ("release through one alone").[34] This particular idea is apparent in the first two lines, especially through the word *mi gnyis* ("oneness") which however must be distinguished from the sense of the word *gnyis med* which expresses negative whereas the former is positive. The next two lines bring in the doctrine that transcends both the theories of *vikalpa* (*rnam par rtog pa*) and *avikalpa* (*rnam par mi rtog pa*). The state of this transcendence is the *rig pa byang chub kyi sems* whose symbolical name is Kun-tu bzang-po. The line *ji bzhin pa zhes mi rtog kyang/*—"though without imagination as "suchness" might give the impression that here it is a question of *mi rtog pa* which the Ch'an school has picked up as one of its fundamental tenets. However, it is not the *mi rtog pa* that is referred to, but rather to *ji bzhin pa*, the noumenal aspect of the *sems* which the commentary defines as the "basis from which all good is produced" (*legs par thams cad skyed pa'i gzhir gyur ba*). It further elucidates the state of *ji bzhin pa* in explicit terms: *ji bzhin pa la rtog pa med pa'i phyir*—"for there is no imagination in suchness". Although the doctrine of *mi rtog pa* in general is important and particularly so in the Ch'an school, according to the rDzogs chen tradition, the very word suggests a counter-part, *rtog pa*, inevitably leading us to the notion of duality which it totally rejects. It is in this context that Rong-zom paṇḍita quotes the following lines from the *lTa ba yang dag sgron ma*:

> "Pleasure and pain in a dream,
> when we awaken are on the same level.
> So if grasped by knowledge,
> Both thought and non-thought are on exactly the same level."
> (*rmi lam dag gi bde dang sdug bsngal yang/*
> *sad par gyur na rang bzhin mnyam pa ltar/*
> *rnam par rtog dang mi rtog gnyis ka yang/*
> *shes pas rig na rang bzhin yongs kyis mnyam/*).[35]

The fifth line contains the notion of "always in being" or "never lacking anything". This is in its embryonic stage, expressed by the word *zin pa*, "already done", "nothing more is needed". Finally the line *lhun gyis gnas par bzhag pa yin/* introduces the theory of the confluence of spontaneity and equanimity, the central tenet of rDzogs chen.

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[34] See pp. 189, n. 71; 198.
[35] *ThCh* f. 262. The text is one of the "Six lamps", see p. 66, n. 21.

*Translation of the basic text (IOL 647, Part I)*

(1a) Svasti.[36] Homage to the great bliss of the indestructible body, speech and mind[37] of the most holy, Kun-tu bzang-po,[38] the one who is most glorious!

(1) All the varieties of phenomenal existence as a whole do not in reality differ from one another.[39]

(2) Individually also they are beyond conceptualisation.

(3) Although as "suchness"[40] there is no mental discursiveness (with regard to them).

(4) Kun-tu bzang-po shines forth in all forms.[41]

(5) Abandon all the malady of striving, for one has already acquired it all.[42]

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[36] = "good luck", "blessing", translated by the expression *dpal gyi dpal*. However, the commentary *KhT* (p. 343) asserts that this is a word of the language of O rgyan (Oḍḍiyāna) and means *khu byug* (cuckoo)!

[37] Normally known as *rdo rje gsum* in Buddhist tantras, *viz. sku rdo rje, gsung rdo rje* and *thugs rdo rje.*

[38] The supreme Buddha in rDzogs chen tradition. Kun-tu bzang-po is a symbolical name or rather personification of the noumenal aspect of the *sems, byang chub kyi sems* (see pp. 52, n. 45; 177). It is he who propounds the rDzogs chen tantras.

[39] *mi gnyis*, "not two". The commentary defines this as *tha mi dad*, "not different". It does not necessarily have the same connotation as *gnyis med*, "without two". While the first is a partial negation (*ma yin dgag = paryudāsa-pratiṣedha, Mvy* 4510), the 2nd is a total negation (*med dgag = prasajya-pratiṣedha*, 4509).

[40] *ji bzhin pa*, a contraction of *ji lta ba bzhin. SM* (p. 396) defines it as *bcos bslad med pa*, "that which is neither altered nor spoiled". It has the same sense as that of *de kho na nyid* or *de bzhin nyid* (*tathatā*), "that which just is so". It is therefore translatable by "thusness" or "suchness". In fact, it often occurs with these side by side: *ji bzhin pa de kho na nyid* (*SM* pp. 388–89), but also in rDzogs chen refers to the *gzhi*, the Primordial Basis which according to *SM* (p. 399) is beyond 50 expressions (*tha snyad lnga bcu las grol ba*). In a later work (*TY* p. 171), commenting on the same verse, *ji bzhin pa* is explained as being *sems nyid* or *sems kyi de kho na nyid*, "the reality of the mind", but always *ye ji bzhin ma* or *ji bzhin nyid kyi skye mched* in Bon works (*Bya bral rjes med, ZhNy* 2a, p. 470).

[41] The phrase *rnam par snang mdzad* here does not seem to have any relation to Buddha Vairocana of the five Buddha families, though the commentary refers to a *maṇḍala* that needs no mental creation through the process of meditation (*bskyed rdzogs bya mi dgos par dkyil 'khor gdon pa*, pp. 55, 58). Moreover, *KhT* (p. 349) comments as: *rnam par ji 'dra bar snang yang/ sems kyi rol ba yin pa'i phyir/*—"in whatever forms they appear, they are the play of the mind".

[42] *zin pa*, Lit. "already done", "finished", but also has the connotation of something that is done from the beginning especially if it is preceded by *ye nas*. Twenty kinds of *zin pa* (*zin pa nyi shu*) are given in *SM* (pp. 344–45), 390):

1. *'gro don ye nas byas zin/*—"the work for living beings is already accomplished".
2. *dkyil 'khor ye nas bkod zin/*—"the *maṇḍala* is created from the beginning".
3. *mchod pa ye nas phul zin pa/*—"offering is made from the beginning".
4. *spyod pa ye nas spyod zin/*—"practices are done from the beginning".
5. *lta ba rtogs zin/*—"already comprehended the theory".
6. *sgom pa byas zin/*—"already practised the meditation".
7. *dam tshig srungs zin/*—"already observed the vows".

(6) One leaves it as it is with spontaneity.[43]

These six verses occur slightly expanded in a late rDzogs chen text entitled *Byang chub sems kyi mdo 'grel* whose composition may go back to the twelfth century A.D. The verses in this version are little more expressive. They are translated below so that they can easily be compared to the version of the Tun-huang document:

(1) "Phenomenal existence involves diversity, but it does not differentiate in absolute terms (*dharmatā*).
(2) The essence, *bodhi*, has no beginning or end.
(3) Hence it cannot be illustrated as it is beyond any expression.
(4) In the absolute which is unalterable.
(5) As "suchness", there is no imagination.
(6) But it appears in diverse forms.
(7) Since there is no acceptance or rejection, it is the one Kun-tu bzang-po.
(8) This has always been beyond striving.
(9) One rests with spontaneity."
(*sNang ba'i chos ni sna tshogs te/*
*chos nyid dag las mi gnyis kyang/*

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8. *bsgrub pa byas zin/*—"already practised the *sādhana*".
9. *dngos grub thob zin/*—"already obtained the *siddhi*".
10. *tshogs rdzogs zin/*—"already accumulated the merit".
11. *dngos grub brtsams zin/* (Cf. n. 9).
12. *sa non zin/*—"already arrived at the stage" (*bhūmi*).
13. *dbang rdzogs zin/*—"already obtained the *dbang, abhiṣeka*)".
14. *sgrib pa sbyang zin/*—"already purified".
15. *phyag rgya bcing bsgoms byas zin/*—"already done the meditation with which one binds (the divinity) to oneself (by means of) hand gesture".
16. *bzlas brjod byas zin/*—"already recited (the *mantra*)".
17. *sbyor ba byas zin/*—"already completed the practice of the union".
18. *bsam skyon byas zin/*—"already corrected the mental faults".
19. *rtags thon zin/*—"already perceived the signs (of success)".
20. *drod rnyed zin/*—"already acquired the warmth", this also refers to a similar sign of success in meditation, more on this, see *SM* pp. 252–53, 465.

The *zin pa nyi shu* sums up well the general Buddhist tantric practice. The only element that is not included in this list is *sgrol ba* which we shall have occasion to discuss.

[43] The adverb *lhun gyis*, "spontaneously", "effortlessly", "naturally" occurs with other verbs, but *lhun gyis gnas pa*, "remain" or "rest spontaneously" seems to have been used only in works later than the 11th century A.D. In other combinations, however, it occurs frequently in rDzogs chen texts: *lhun gyis 'jug pa*, "entering spontaneously", *lhun gyis rdzogs pa*, "achieved spontaneously". The most frequent one and used in works other than on rDzogs chen is *lhun gyis grub pa* (*lhun grub pa, anābhoga, Mvy* 411), "effortless", "without striving". *lhun grub* is one of the two terms used to describe special qualities of the Primordial Basis. The other term being *ka dag*, Primaeval Purity. Further discussion on these terms, see p. 181.

*snying po byang chub chags gzhigs nas/*
*mtshon du med de spros dang bral/*
*ma bcos pa zhes mi rtog kyang/*
*sna tshogs rnam par snang mdzad la/*
*blang dor med pas kun tu bzang/*
*ye nas rtsol sgrub 'das pas na/*
*byas zin rtsol ba'i nad spangs te/*
*lhun gyis gnas pas bzhag pa yin/*)[44]

*Translation of the commentary (IOL 647, Part II)*

(*f.* 1a, *l.* 4) "In all the tantras,[45] it is stated that Vajrasattva[46] is the chief of all yoga,[47] but here Kun-tu bzang-po is mentioned as the chief. What is the significance of this?"[48] "It is thought that Vajrasattva is mentioned when it is about seeking a desired goal and when there are different grades in the achievement. But here one does not seek any kind of goal like that. Taking into account this fact, Kun-tu bzang-po is even more suitable. (2*a*) This is very clear to those who are intelligent enough."

The significance of the phrase *dpal gyi dpal*[49] is this: *dpal* means "that which is given", but to show that one is spontaneous and devoid of any striving, mental or physical, is even better than that which is totally given. The phrase *bcom ldan 'das* signifies one who possesses the *dharaṇī* in which there is neither integration nor disintegration.[50] *Kun-tu bzang-po*

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[44] Kaneko No. 2, f. 305.

[45] The tantras referred to here are the Mahāyoga tantras, such as the *Guhyagarbha* rather than the rDzogs chen tantras, i.e. Atiyoga tantras mostly found in *NyG*. However, admitted that they refer to Atiyoga tantras, we face two problems:

a) most of the tantras grouped in the section of rDzogs chen in *NyG* are undatable. At any rate, in the present form, they hardly date back beyond the 11th century A.D. except some of the texts which constitute the group of the 18 Sems sde texts (see p. 23) and those which are quoted in *SM*.

b) It is Kun-tu bzang-po and not Vajrasattva who is presented in these "tantras" as being the supreme Buddha preaching Atiyoga tantras. He appears under various names: Kun-byed rgyal-po, Kun-rig rgyal-po, Rig-pa'i rgyal-po, Shes-rig-gi rgyal-po, and so forth. On the other hand, in Mahāyoga tantras, it is Vajrasattva who is presented as the chief Buddha.

[46] See note 45.

[47] As the central point of the tantric teachings is yoga, different ways came into use for classifying tantras according to the different "grades" of yoga, Cf. pp. 172–74.

[48] This question is very important in that it indicates that in the time of the author of this text, no "tantras" like the later "rDzogs chen tantras" having Kun-tu bzang-po as the supreme Buddha yet existed, Cf. note 38. It further confirms the fact that the text here under discussion is one of the earliest prototypes of the rDzogs chen texts.

[49] Cf. note 36.

[50] This interpretation differs totally from the definition of the epithet given in *GB* (p. 73–5–7).

signifies that in whichever way one rolls, one never wanders away from the centre of the point.[51]

The significance of *sku gsung thugs rdo rje*[52] is the "single way"[53] which leads one away from the three worlds. *bDe ba chen po* denotes that one who has the experience of tasting "suchness". The phrase *phyag 'tshal lo* signifies spontaneous dwelling in the state of the "great bliss".

The way of this, is elucidated in the following verses such as *sna tshogs rang bzhin mi gnyis kyang/* etc. (2*b*)

(1) *sna tshogs rang bzhin mi gnyis kyang/*

All the elements in the phenomenal world, defect and quality etc. involve diversity, but all of them are by nature undifferentiated from one another in their essential equanimity. "Well! If you consider that oneness involves diversity, is it not as if one were dividing space into small parts?" (Reply to the question:) "It is not possible as far as the central principle is concerned". That is why one says:

(2) *cha shas nyid du spros dang bral/*

i.e. oneness cannot be diversified. As no word can convey its significance, it is explained as being without amplification.[54]

(3) *ji bzhin pa zhes mi rtog kyang/*

The word *ji bzhin pa* refers to the preceding subject. The word *mi rtog* means not to dwell upon that subject (i.e. *ji bzhin pa*). "Well! One finds in all the authentic scriptures (3*a*) that (i.e. *ji bzhin pa*) is the basis from which all good develops and if one does not dwell upon it, would one be able to acquire any part of the great qualities?" (Reply to the question:) "I agree that mental activity ceases in "suchness", but there is no question of dwelling upon it nor is there any question of the great qualities not existing, for one says:

(4) *rnam par snang mdzad kun tu bzang/*

As the appearance of all kinds of forms is the production of "suchness" one needs not make any effort to acquire the great qualities, for they are the play of the essence from the beginning and one already possesses them all.

(5) *zin pas rtsol ba'i nad spangs te/*

(6) *lhun gyis gnas pas bzhag pa yin/*

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[51] The same phrase occurs in *SM* (p. 351) with several misspellings: *'gro ('gre) log spyid (spyi) tshugs gang (gar) 'dres ('gres) kyang/ snying po'i don las 'da' ba med do/*, but in a slightly different context. Here it is used to convey the idea that since the essence of Buddha is within oneself, it is no use searching for it elsewhere, for example, "whichever way one rolls, one is never away from one's own physical centre". In yet another text (*TG* f. 226) it reads: *'gro ldig spyi gtsu gar song yan/ snying po don las g.yos pa med/*.

[52] See note 37.

[53] This probably refers to the notion similar to *theg pa gcig pa* (*ekayāna*), and may also be connected with *sa gcig pa*, see note 26.

[54] Cf. with the verses 7 and 8 of *IOL* 594, p. 72; also *KhT* pp. 347–48.

The word *zin pa* here signifies that every wish has already been fulfilled. To do something that is already done is just a malady which causes fatigue in oneself. The malady of striving must be avoided. (3*b*) One is therefore intrinsically endowed with all the things one wants though one has never pursued them. That is why it is called "resting spontaneously", that means nothing is to be done. One leaves oneself undisturbed in the state of "suchness". It means without striving and pursuing something pointedly.[55]

The general summary of all this is known as the way of the Great Bliss of the glorious one Kun-tu bzang-po. To be able to resolve to abandoning all the objects to which one is attached is called the "Great inner ambrosia", and it is the best means for comprehending the non-realisable Enlightenment. When one is dwelling upon the authoritative sources, the practice of one's vows also resides totally in spontaneity.

(1. Killing) As for "deliverance", the "material" eliminates itself. Self-elimination is the main method (of deliverance). But here (i.e. according to rDzogs chen doctrine) even the word "material" itself does not exist (4*a*), "deliverance" is therefore the chief means, and it resides intrinsically in spontaneity.[56]

(2. Fornication) As for the "union",[57] it is the "sphere" where there is neither union nor disunion. (But here), there is not (even the notion of) "union", for one is unceasingly in union with the queen.[58]

(3. Stealing) One remains within the possession of all the phenomena of the world and beyond, hence nothing is needed. Though one has not been given anything, one possesses all. So it is called "stealing".

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[55] On *gza' gtad*, Cf. p. 113; The six verses are treated in great detail in *KhT* (pp. 346–50) under the framework of *lta ba* (view), *sgom pa* (contemplation), *la bzlas pa* (transcendence) and *gol sa* (deviation). These last two verses (5–6) are also explained in *ThCh* (f. 274) as follows: *chos thams cad kyi rang bzhin ni kun tu bzang po'i sku gsung thugs rdo rje bde ba chen po'i ngang du rdzogs zin pa'i phyir/ mi mthun pa dang gnyen po blang dor gyi nad spans te/ btang snyoms chen po'i ngang la lhun gyis gnas pa 'di ni mnyam par bzhag pa ces bya ba'i don yin no/.*

[56] For a discussion on the practice of *sgrol ba*, see Karmay 1979, p. 151, ff.

[57] *Ibid.*, p. 151 ff.

[58] The expression *gzungs kyi rgyal mo* refers to *shes rab* (*prajñā*), i.e. *yum*. In sādhanas, the feminine partner is known under various terms: e.g. *rig ma* or *gzungs ma*. The feminine partner is called *gzungs ma* because in order to be qualified as such she has to be "blessed" with five *dharanī* syllables, Cf. *rDo rje bkod pa, K* Vol. 81, No. 4576, P. 263–1–2: *skyes pa bla mas yum du bzung/ gzungs su byin gyis brlabs pa ni/ de yi gzugs kyi phung po la/ bde bar gshegs pa'i sa bon lnga/ 'phro 'du gsal bar gyur ba ste/*. . . Cf. also *PT* 841, f. 2b; *gzungs* by itself also has the same meaning in certain works, e.g. *Sangs rgyas kyi sa* by Rong-zom Chos-kyi bzang-po (*Rang zom bka' 'bum*, f. 450): *gzungs dang gnyis su med sbyor ba . . ./*

(4.) As for "lie", it means a word which has no relevance to the truth. (But here), whether a word has a point or not, it is a deviation from the principle. So it is called "lie".

Hence all the four vows reside in spontaneity. The four neither increase nor decrease (i.e. are never more or less). Now the five vows[59] for not abandoning, they overlap the above group. Anger belongs to (the category of) "deliverance". Desire to "union". (4*b*) Ignorance means that which is beyond the object of intellect, but the Great Self[60] (i.e. Kun-tu bzang-po) possesses no intellect. So it is called "ignorance". Pride signifies something which does not change. The Great Self is unchangeable, for it is never away from its own nature of greatness. As for jealousy, even if one imparts (the teaching) to those who are not suited to receive it, they do not understand. Though one's qualities are great, no one knows about them and so they (remain) in great secrecy by nature.

*The four main points (i.e. of the basic text):*

(1) Salutation.
(2) The "Enlightened Mind" which is beyond description and spontaneous.
(3) Creation[61] of the *maṇḍala* without the meditational practices of *utpannakrama* and *saṃpannakrama.*
(4) Remaining unaltered in spontaneity.

The "Cuckoo of Intellect" is the example. The "Understanding of the ornament of appearance" is the meaning. The "Six Vajra words" are the number (i.e. the verses of the basic text).[62]

(5a) Reflect upon the theory and practice of yoga according to the way of the Great Perfection which is content of the "*Cuckoo of Intellect*". Now the level of intelligence among people varies enormously from one to another. The *dharma* teachings are accordingly very numerous and are mainly taught as intentional (*neyārtha*). But to the intelligent ones, the truth (*nītārtha*) is taught in the form of most correct precepts. The Absolute (*dharmatā*) has, from the beginning, never been pronounced, for it is devoid of cause. Since the theory and practice of Kun-tu bzang-po are of

[59] The five kinds of passions are here treated as the "five vows".
[60] On this term see p. 114.
[61] *gdon pa, 'don pa*, to recite, but the use of the word here implies the recitation of ritual texts when a *maṇḍala* is being constructed, mentally or otherwise.
[62] These are the titles of the text, Cf. p. 42.

the reality immanent in all sentient beings, no effort and striving[63] are necessary now and in the future.

Therefore, there are three principles to be observed with regard to that which is already achieved from the beginning:
(1) To remain without striving is the "accomplishment".
(2) To avoid nothing is the "vow".
(3) To hold nothing is the "offering".
Kun-tu bzang-po says that to remain within these principles is yoga. The end.

*Transliteration of the Tibetan text*

*IOL* 647 (Ch. 73 III 20 [29])

(Part I)

(Fol. 1*a*, line 1) svasti dpal gyi dpal/ bcom ldan 'das/ kun tu[1] bzang po/ sku gsung thugs rdo rje bde ba chen po la phyag 'tshal lo// (*l.* 2)
(1) sna tshogs rang bzhin myi gnyis kyang/
(2) cha shas nyid du spros dang bral/
(3) ji bzhin pa[2] zhes myi rtog kyang/
(4) rnam par snang mdzad kun tu (*l.* 3) bzang/
'(5) zin pas rtsol ba'i nad spangs te/
(6) lhun gyis[3] gnas pas[4] bzhag[5] pa yin//

(Part II)

(*l.* 4) de la rnal 'byor kun gyi[6] gtso bo ni/ dpal rdo rje sems dpa' 'o zhes/ rgyud mtha' dag las grags na/ (*l.* 5) 'dir kun tu bzang po gtsor smos pa/ don gyi dbang gang las dgongs she na/ de ni bsgrub pa'i mtha' dang grub pa'i khyad par[7] dag kyang (*l.* 6) gsung par[8] bzhed la/ 'di ni de lta bu gang yang myi sgrub pas/ don gyi[9] dbang 'di btsan[10] par[11] byas na/ kun tu bzang po ni de'i yang rje btsun du 'os pa/ (Fol. 2*a*, *l.* 1) rig pa rnyed pa dag la shin tu[12] gsal lo/ de la dpal gyi dpal zhes bya ba la/ thams cad[13] du legs pa sbyin pa[14] dpal yin la/ (*l.* 2) de yang bstal ba myed par lhun

[63] *bya ba dang bral ba*, "act free", hence the expression *bya bral ba*, one who has renounced all mundane life, but in a Bonpo rDzogs chen work entitled *Bya bral rjes med* (*ZhNy* 2a, p. 470), it is explained as "that which is beyond the calculation of mind" (*blo'i rtsis gdab dang bral bas bya bral*). Cf. also p. 112.

[1] Throughout the text, the particle *du* for *kun tu* is given.—[2] Again the syllable *ba* instead of *pa* for *jin bzhin pa* occurs throughout the manuscript.—[3] This particle occurs as *kyis* insistently.—[4] The copy of the same work preserved in *NyG* Ka, f. 419 reads *gnas pa*.—[5] gzhag,—[6] kyi,—[7] bar,—[8] bar,—[9] kyi,—[10] brtsan,—[11] bar,—[12] du,—[13] The manuscript has the form *chad* throughout.—[14] ba.

gyis[15] grub pa nyid du ston pa ni/ de'i yang dpal zhes bya'o/ bcom ldan 'das zhes bya ba ni/ 'du 'bral myed pa (*l.* 3) 'i gzungs dang ldan pa'i don to/ kun tu bzang po zhes bya ba ni/ 'gre log spyi'u tshugs gar 'gres kyang/ snying po'i don las (*l.* 4) myi 'da' ba'i phyir ro/ sku gsung thugs rdo rje zhes bya ba ni/ myi gnyis pa'i theg pas khams gsum las nges par (*l.* 5) 'byung ba la bya'o/ bde ba chen po zhes bya ba ni/ ji bzhin pa'i ro myong ba'i bdag nyid do/ phyag 'tshal lo zhes bya ba ni/ de'i klong[16] du ngang gis gnas (*l.* 6) pa la bya'o/ de'i tshul ni/

sna tshogs rang bzhin myi gnyis kyang/

zhes bya ba la stsogs pa tshigs su bcad pa 'di dag gis bstan te/
(Fol. 2*b, l.* 1)

sna tshogs rang bzhin myi gnyis kyang

zhes bya ba la/ skyon dang yon tan la stsogs pa bsnyad pa'i chos mtha' dag ni sna tshogs te/ de dag kyang mnyam (*l.* 2) pa nyid kyi snying po la/ rang bzhin tha myi dad do zhes bstan te/ 'o na sna tshogs tha myi dad pa nyid kyang/ nam mkha' la cha shas su gse ba dang 'dra (*l.* 3) bar/ myi 'gyur ram zhe na/ de yang snying po'i don la myi srid pa'i phyir/

cha shas nyid du spros dang bral

zhes brjod (*l.* 4) pa yin te/ tshig gis mtshon pa'i lam de tsam yang rab tu[17] nub pas/ spros pa dang bral lo zhes ba'i don to/

ji bzhin (*l.* 5) pa zhes myi rtog kyang

zhes bya ba la/ gong du bstan pa'i don ni/ ji bzhin pa zhes bya'o/ myi rtog ces bya ba ni/ de la yang gnas myi byed do/ zhes (*l.* 6) bya ba'i tha tshig go/ 'o na yongs[18] legs pa thams cad skyed pa'i gzhir gyurd pa ni/ de yin no zhes/ yang dag pa'i bka' thams chad las mngon (Fol. 3*a, l.* 1) du thos na/ de la yang myi gnas na/ che ba'i yon tan thams chad kyi phyogs ci yang myi 'byung ba dag tu myi 'gyur ram zhe na/ ji bzhin (*l.* 2) pa la ni rtog pa myed pa'i phyir/ 'dod kyang gnas pa'i srid pa myed do/ 'on kyang che ba'i yon tan gyi phyogs yongs[19]myed pa ma yin pa'i[20] phyir/ (*l.* 3)

rnam par snang mdzad ku tu bzang

zhes brjod pa yin te/ rnam pa sna thsogs par snang bar mdzad pa nyid/ ji bzhin pa nyid yin (*l.* 4) pas[21]/ gdod dbyung yang myi dgos te/ ye nas snying po'i rol pa che ba'i yon tan legs la mtha' dag rdzogs zin to/ (*l.* 5) zhes bya ba'i don to/

zin pas rtsol ba'i nad spangs te/
lhun gyis gnas pas bzhag[22] pa yin/

zhes bya ba la/ zin pa zhes bya ba ni/ (*l.* 6) 'dod pa thams cad da ltar rdzogs zin pa'i don te/ byas zin pa la/ gdod rtsol ba ni/ rang tshi chad pa'i nad du zad pas/ rtsol ba'i nad (Fol. 3*b, l.* 1) spangs te zhes bya'o/ de bas na dgos pa mtha' dag ma gnyer kyang/ lhun gyis grub zin pas/ lhun gyis gnas pa zhes bya ste/ (*l.* 2) bya ba myed pa'i phyir/ ji bzhin pa'i ngang

[15] kyis—[16] klung—[17] du—[18] yong—[19] yong—[20] ba'i—[21] bas—[22] gzhag

las myi g.yo bar bzhag[23] pa yin te/ gza' gtad kyi rtsol sgrub myed do zhes bya ba'i don to/

'di'i (*l.* 3) spyi don ni/ dpal kun tu bzang po bde ba chen po rdzogs pa'i tshul zhes bya'o/ gces myi gces kyi mtshan ma thams (*l.* 4) cad gtong bar dang du len par nus pa ni/ nang gi bdud rtsi chen po zhes bya ste/ myi len pa'i byang chub len pa'i thabs (*l.* 5) dam pa yin pa'i[24] phyir/ ji bzhin pa'i lung la gnas pa'i dus na/ spyod pa'i dam tshig kyang lhun gyis grub pa nyid du tshang bar gnas te/ (*l.* 6) bsgral ba yang dngos po'i chos rnams/ 'jig pa'i thabs kyi gtso bo yin te/ 'di na dngos po mying tsam yang rab tu[25] nub pas/ sgrol ba thabs kyi (Fol. 4*a, l.* 1) gtso bor gyurd pa'i phyir/ sgrol ba lhun gyis grub par gnas so/ sbyor ba ni 'du 'bral myed pa'i dbyings la bya ste/ 'du 'bral (*l.* 2) gyi ming yang myed pas/ gzungs kyi rgyal mo dang rgyun myi 'chad par sbyor ro/ 'di las 'jig rten dang 'jig rten las 'das pa'i chos thams (*l.* 3) cad/ bsnan pa myed par gnas te/ ma byin yang thams cad yod pas/ ma byin par blangs pa zhes bya'o/ (*l.* 4) brdzun du smra ba ni/ don dang ma 'brel pa'i tshig la bya ste/ gza' gtad kyi don thams cad dang/ gza' ba myed (*l.* 5) pa'i don 'dir gol bas/ brdzun du smra ba zhes bya'o/ de ltar tha tshig rnam bzhi yang lhun gyis grub pa nyid du gnas te/ skye 'grib kyi skabs (*l.* 6) myed do/ de la ni/ myi spang ba'i dam tshig rnam pa lnga yang/ gong ma nyid du 'dus te/ zhe sdang ni sgrol bar 'dus/ 'dod chags ni sbyor bar 'dus/ (Fol. 4*b, l.* 1) gti mug ni rig shes kyi spyod yul las 'das pa la bya ste/ bdag nyid chen po 'di la rig shes tsam yang myed pas/ gti mug ces bya/ nga rgyal (*l.* 2) ni 'gyur ba myed pa'i don la bya ste/ nges pa chen po'i bdag nyid la 'gyur ba myed de/ che ba'i rang bzhin las myi 'da' ba'i phyir ro/ phrag dog (*l.* 3) ni snod ma yin pa rnams la bstan kyang myi shes te/ legs pa'i yon tan che yang/ sus kyang myi shes pas/ (*l.* 4) rang bzhin gyis gsang ba chen po yin pa'i phyir ro/

don bzhi la/ phyag 'tshal ba dang/ brjod pa dang bral ba'i (*l.* 5) byang chub kyi sems lhun gyis grub pas/ bskyed rdzogs bya myi dgos par dkyil 'khor 'don[26] pa lhun gyis gnas pa la ma bcos par (*l.* 6) gnas pa'o/ rig pa'i khu byug ni dpe/ rig byed snang ba'i rgyan ni don/ rdo rje tshig drug ni grangs// //

(Fol. 5*a, l.* 1) rnal 'byor gyi lta spyod rdzogs pa chen po'i tshul/ rig pa'i khu byug gi don yid la brnag par bya'o/ de la gang zag gi blo'i rim (*l.* 2) pa ni/ bsam gyis myi khyab pas/ chos kyi sgo yang/ de dang mthun par[27] drang ba'i don du mang du gsungs kyis kyang/ nges pa'i don blo mchog dang (*l.* 3) ldan pa la/ yang dag pa'i man ngag tu[28] bya na/ chos nyid ni gdod ma nas ma gsungs pa'i phyir/ rgyu rkyen gyis dben (*l.* 4) la/ kun tu

[23] gzhag—[24] ba'i—[25] du—[26] gdon—[27] bar—[28] du

bzang po'i lta spyod ni/ 'gro ba kun la zin pa'i chos nyid yin pas[29]/ da gzod rtsol zhing bya ba dang bral (*l.* 5) ba yin no/ de lta bas na ye nas zin pas chos la/ myi brtsal bar bzhag[30] pa ni dngos grub/ gang yang ma spangs pa ni dam tshig/ yongs (*l.* 6) su gzung ba myed pa ni/ mchod sbyin yin te/ don 'di gsum la gnas na/ rnal 'byor yin no zhes/ kun tu bzang pos[31] gsungs[32]/ īti/ rdzogs sho//

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## Tun-huang document No. II (IOL 594)

The Tun-huang manuscript *IOL* 594 consists of two folios in the traditional Tibetan format. Folio 1*a* contains a short introductory comment in nine lines to the main text which begins on folio 1*b* and finishes on folio 2*b* in the first line. The text itself is in 26 verses and is complete. The introductory part is copied in that typical early Tibetan script found mostly among the Tun-huang manuscripts. This particular style of the script seems to have survived only in Bhutan. The main text is scribed in *'bru ma* script in rather big characters with interlinear notes in red in the small Tun-huang *dbu can* script already described. The interlinear notes have been placed in a particular way wherever they are required, but are not accompanied by the usual Tibetan way of marking which is to put small dots leading towards the word or phrase whose meaning they are meant to clarify.

### *Problem of the identification of the text*

It is stated in the introductory part that the main text was composed by a Sangs-rgyas sbas-pa which would be Buddhagupta in Sanskrit, but the author of the introductory part does not mention his own name. The main text itself indicates no name of author though it has a short colophon containing one of its titles, *sBas pa'i rgum chung*. The question whether the interlinear notes were of the author's own or added to the text later by someone else remains unanswered. At any rate, they had been with the text before the time of writing the introductory part was written, for it speaks of certain topics, such as six kinds of *jñāna* and the *che ba lnga* which are to be found only in the interlinear notes and not in the main text. As regards the question of author identification, we have at least a name clearly indicated, but this name is unfortunately surrounded by obscurity and confusion and so we shall therefore have to consider

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[29] bas—[30] gzhag—[31] po—[32] gsung

it in another place.[1] The introductory part is of considerable importance for an understanding of the origin and content of the main text. That it is joined with the main text in the manuscript points to the fact that it was written by someone who perhaps had been a close contemporary of the author of the main text, if not an immediate disciple. Before examining the main text, let us therefore consider the introductory part. It states that the main text has two titles: the "Small hidden grain" (*sBas pa'i rgum chung*) which is the simile (*dpe*) title, while "the central point of space" (*nam mkha'i thig le*) is the real title (*don*). Although the introductory part does not link the first title with the name of the author, i.e. Sangs-rgyas sbas-pa, it is not impossible that it is connected with its author's name, the Small grain of (Sangs-rgyas) sbas-pa. The tradition of giving two titles to one work is quite common among the works on rDzogs chen of the Bonpo. For example, the *Byang sems gab pa dgu bskor* is also known as the *g. Yung drung sems kyi myu gu* which is given as the simile title (*dpe las mtshan du btags pa*), whereas the first one is given from the viewpoint of the subject (*don las mtshan du gsol ba*).[2]

It is therefore quite probable that this work, *sBas pa'i rgum chung* was one of the prime movers of the literary development of the rDzogs chen tradition. It seems to have served as the basis for certain parts of *KG* of the rNying ma pa and of the *Byang sems gab pa dgu bskor* of the Bonpo. Moreover, it is certain that it was taken as the basis for other texts on rDzogs chen. This is proved by the fact that it not only gave the philosophical and doctrinal inspiration to but some parts of it are actually incorporated into three important works which go back at least to the late ninth century A.D.: the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan*,[3] the *lTa ba rgum chung*[4] and the *Man ngag rgum chung*,[5] all three preserved in the *bsTan 'gyur* under the name of their author, gNyan dPal-dbyangs. While verses 19–26 are incorporated in the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan*, verses 1–4 have been placed

[1] See p. 61.

[2] *Gab pa'i 'grel bzhi rig pa'i rgya mtsho* (Karmay 1977, No. 73, text 5, pp. 187–88; Cf. *Rin po che rtsod pa'i 'khor lo*, *T* Vol. 144, No. 5841, p. 117–4–7. A story had it that when Atiśa composed his famous short work, *Bodhipathapradīpa*, he asked the Tibetans how they give a title to a book and they told him that one title is given in accordance with the contents, another one from the view point of a simile and also in connection with the place where a work is composed as well as the person at whose behest the author writes his book. Atiśa was astonished and said: "Ah! in Tibet there are a lot of accounts of things that are unheard of in India!" (*LB* p. 40: *jo bo rjes byang chub lam sgron mdzad pa'i tshe khyed bod la mtshan gyi 'dogs lugs ji lta bu yod gsung/ bod ston rnams kyis/ don la mtshan du gsol ba dang/ dpe la mtshan du gsol ba dang/ yul dang zhu ba po la mtshan du gsol ba la sogs pa du ma bdog zhus pas/ a ye/ bod na rgya gar na med pa'i gtam mang po 'dug gsung/*.

[3] See p. 67.

[4] *T* Vol. 150, No. 5920.

[5] *T* Vol. 150, No. 5922.

at the end of the *lTa ba rgum chung* and verses 5–8, 11, and 13–16 are found in the *Man ngag rgum chung*. Some verses have simply been incorporated while others have been slightly changed or re-written keeping the essential points. For comparative studies, the last two works have been edited below and translated along with our Tun-huang document. *SM* is the earliest work which quotes some of the verses under the title of *rGum chung*,[6] but a comparison shows that *SM* has quoted from the works of gNyan dPal-dbyangs and not from the *sBas pa'i rgum chung*, i.e. the work contained in our Tun-huang document.

The first four verses are also quoted in the important eleventh century work, *ThCh* of Rong-zom Chos-kyi bzang-po. However, here too, he quotes them as being from the *lTa ba rgum chung*.[7] Therefore, there is no doubt regarding the antiquity of the *lTa ba rgum chung* and the *Man ngag rgum chung*. The fact that both *SM* and *ThCh* quote from these texts and not directly from the *sBas pa'i rgum chung* suggests that the latter had already fallen into oblivion in the tenth and early eleventh centuries A.D. and works such as the *lTa ba rgum chung* and the *Man ngag rgum chung* which had used the *sBas pa'i rgum chung* were current in the time of the author of *SM*, around the early tenth century and in the time of Rong-zom, mid-eleventh century. It is therefore not improbable that the composition of the text *sBas pa'i rgum chung* of which we have only a Tun-huang manuscript copy dates back to the eighth century A.D., but this question indeed is correlated to the identification of the authors of the works concerned, and which we propose to deal with below.

### *The author of the sBas pa'i rgum chung*

The introductory part of *IOL* 594 ascribes the *sBas pa'i rgum chung* to a master known as Sangs-rgyas sbas-pa (Buddhagupta). A Buddhagupta is also mentioned in *SM* as an adept of the Mahāyoga tantras beside Vimalamitra and Padmasambhava in the chapter on Mahāyoga tantric teachings and again three times as one of the rDzogs chen masters in the chapter on rDzogs chen of the same work.[8] There is little doubt that all these refer to the personage who was the author of the *sBas pa'i rgum chung*. That this name occurs in *SM* beside the names of other masters, like Vimalamitra points to the fact that the author of *SM* in the tenth century considered Buddhagupta as belonging to a period which seemed to him already long in the past.

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[6] *SM* p. 382, Cf. also pp. 404, 440 of the same work.
[7] *ThCh* f. 289.
[8] *SM* pp. 223, 315, 344, 414 (in the last three references the name occurs in the interlinear notes).

The rNying ma pa tradition also knows a Buddhagupta. The name occurs in the *Vairo 'dra 'bag* as the twentieth in a line of twenty-three rDzogs chen masters.[9] And this is presumably one and the same personage. However, the problem does not end here. Affected by strong criticisms of the rDzogs chen doctrine by other Buddhist sects, the rNying ma pa often tried to shelter themselves by making false identifications of the ancient masters with those who were traditionally accepted as great teachers by other sects. It has been claimed that the name Buddhagupta is simply another form of the name Buddhaguhya (Sang-rgyas gsang-ba). Therefore, the rDzogs chen master Buddhagupta would be identical with the tantric master Buddhaguhya who elsewhere is well known as an adept of Yoga tantras of the gSar ma pa tradition. He was a disciple of Buddha-śrījñānapāda and is thought to have been a resident for some time near Mount Kailash in the eighth century A.D.[10] There is a letter which is said to have been sent by him to King Khri Srong-lde-btsan (742–797). The letter implicitly indicates that it was in this place that he received the Tibetan king's envoy with an invitation to him asking him to come to Central Tibet which however he declined.[11] Nevertheless, he authored several works as a gift to the king on yoga tantras whose translations in Tibetan are preserved in the *bsTan 'gyur*.[12] The translations are mostly made by dBa' 'Jam-dpal go-cha (Mañjuśrīvarma),[13] one of the three members of the embassy. Therefore we have no problem as to the historicity of this personage, Buddhaguhya who lived in the middle of the eighth century nor is there any doubt of his authorship of the works just noted.

The name Buddhaguhya occurs in the colophons of most of the above works except in certain cases where the name Buddhagupta is given. Accordingly in Tibetan when it is Buddhaguhya, it is translated as Sangs-rgyas gsang-ba and when Buddhagupta by Sangs-rgyas sbas-pa, but both names refer to one and the same person, i.e. Buddhaguhya, for the lo-tsā-ba who did the translation of the works is always dBa' 'Jam-dpal go-cha. As noted, Buddhaguhya is a master of the Yoga tantras of the gSar ma pa tradition, but at the same time we also find that a number of works

[9] Folios 24b–31b, but Cf. *TY* p. 138 where only 22 names are given, see pp. 19–20.
[10] Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub, *Yoga gru gzings*, *SPS* Vol. 51 (Da), p. 135; Tāranātha, *Dam pa'i chos rin po che 'phags pa'i yul du ji ltar dar ba'i tshul gsal bar ston pa'i dgos 'dod kun 'byung* (*rGya gar chos 'byung*), Varanasi 1971, pp. 201–2.
[11] *T* Vol. 129, No. 5693, p. 284–2–5.
[12] *T* Vol. 70, No. 3324; 77, Nos. 3461, 3486; 78, Nos. 3495, 3504, 3751–52; 79, Nos. 3687, 3750; 81, No. 4528. In *TD*, however, the form of Buddhagupta is consistently given (p. 146–5–3) despite the fact that in the colophons it is often Buddhaguhya.
[13] He is probably one and the same as Mañjuśrīvarma who participated in the compilation of the *Mahāvyutpatti* (*GB* p. 73–1–3).

of uncertain origin on Māyājāla (*sgyu 'phrul*) tantras in the *bsTan 'gyur* are attributed to his name. For example, the *Thugs kyi thigs pa.*[14] It is stated that this work was composed by Sangs-rgyas gsang-ba as well as by Vimalamitra and sGeg-pa-pa'i rdo-rje (Līlāvajra). The attribution of works on Māyājāla to Buddhaguhya in the *bsTan 'gyur* such as the work just mentioned is therefore totally uncertain. The Māyājāla tantras however do have a connection with rDzogs chen, especially the *Guhyagarbha-tantra* which came to be considered the most important tantra of the Mahāyoga category of the rNying ma pa tradition.[15] Moreover, it may be considered as the source of a certain trend of the rDzogs chen thought. It is probably because of this connection that 'Gos Lo-tsā-ba gZhon-nu-dpal (1392–1481) and the rNying ma pa insist on the identification of the rDzogs chen master Buddhagupta with Buddhaguhya of the Yoga tantras of the gSar ma pa tradition. 'Gos Lo-tsā-ba seems to have been the first to propose this superficial solution of the problem on behalf of the rNying ma pa.[16]

However, the existence of a Buddhagupta practising Māyājāla tantras and consequently as one of those who first promulgated the rDzogs chen doctrine is irrefutably attested by the mention of the name in *SM* in the chapter on Mahāyoga tantras. This Buddhagupta may therefore be one and the same as Sangs-rgyas sbas-pa, the author of the *sBas pa'i rgum chung*, and also the one who figures as the twentieth in the line of twenty-three Indian masters given in the *Vairo 'dra 'bag*. Yet still another major problem remains: did Sangs-rgyas sbas-pa write the text first in Sanskrit? If he did, no mention is made with regard to the question of translation nor any indication is found that it had a Sanskrit title. Nevertheless, unlike other works on rDzogs chen in *NyG*, our text at least has no pretention of being of Indic origin although it may be so. To judge from the syntactical structure, it could in fact have been composed in Tibetan from the very beginning. The possibility that this personage was a Tibetan master who had a name in Sanskrit cannot entirely be excluded.

### *Analysis of the text sBas pa'i rgum chung and its introductory part*

The introductory part which is not an integral part of the main text gives an outline of the important points in the main text under the following five headings:

[14] *T* Vol. 83, No. 4738.
[15] See p. 139.
[16] *DNg* Ga, f. 31b (*BA* p. 170). A similar tendency to identify obscure names of the rNying ma pa teachers with well known ones of the gSar ma pa has continued right up to this day. In his *Chos 'byung lha dbang g.yul las rgyal ba'i rnga bo che'i sgra* (Kalempong 1964), bDud-'joms 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje states: "according to some, Buddhaśrījñānapāda is another name for Śrīsiṃha and if we compare their life-stories, I also think that these names are of the same person (f. 63b)". On Śrīsiṃha, Cf. Karmay 1975, p. 149–51.

1. Author: Sangs-rgyas sbas-pa.
2. Category: Atiyoga.
3. Source: *Byang chub kyi sems kyi lung* (This is not the title of a specific work, but rather a certain category of works).
4. Purpose: For the very intelligent ones.
5. Framework: in five sections.

After this analysis, it gives a list of three different groups of teachings which are in fact indicated only in the interlinear notes in the manuscript:

1. The Six kinds of *ye shes* (*jñāna*).[17]
2. The "Five great ones" (*che ba lnga*).[18]
3. The "Three Beings" (*yin pa gsum*).[19]

The first six verses of the main text according to the interlinear notes signify the "Six *jñāna*", but how these verses signify them is not explained. Another note just below the first verse of the main text also says: *che ba rnam lngar yang sbyar*—"each of the 'Five great ones' is to be put together (with each of the five verses)", but here too no explanation is given as to how and why the *che ba lnga* should correspond to the first five verses. The first three verses of the main text also signify the *yin pa gsum*. These different elements in the interlinear notes are simply "represented" by certain verses and so they are symbolical and suggestive rather than explanations of the actual sense of the verses.

Before going on to the actual framework of the main text, the introductory part discusses the different titles of which there are two and which we have already had occasion to mention. The framework of the main text is as follows:

1. Homage, rendered by the phrase that precedes the verses.
2. The nature of "the Enlightened Mind" which is dealt with by verses 1–6.
3. "The Enlightened Mind" being without an example.
4. The exposure of the face of the "Basis of All".[20]
5. The "deviation" explained by the verses 7–20.

### *Doctrines contained in the sBas pa'i rgum chung*

As is the case in the *Rig pa'i khu byug*, Kun-tu bzang-po is here also presented as the supreme being to whom the text pays homage. It then be-

[17] To the usual five kinds of *ye shes* (*jñāna*), *stong pa chen po'i ye shes* is added.

[18] This is mentioned only once in the interlinear notes. For a detailed discussion on this, see p. 200, n. 40.

[19] For these, see p. 114, n. 58. 71.

[20] See p. 178.

gins with a discussion of the theory of *mi rtog pa*, but at the same time attempts to resolve an apparent contradiction: "if a non-imagination appears as an object of mind, then it is not simply a non-imagination, because the mind perceives non-imagination as its object". The answer to this riddle is as follows: "one experiences the depth of the non-imagination. The experience is not an act of imagination. Therefore when imagination occupies the mind, with its depth, it is experiencing itself, not perceiving."

The text then goes on to state that all words fail to express this experience and physical and mental activities involve a "fixing stake" (*'dzin pa'i phur pa*). The remaining verses bring in the important rDzogs chen theories: the absolute aspect of mind (*sems nyid*) being the basis of all (*kun gzhi*). *Byang chub sems*, the noumenal state of *sems nyid* which is often symbolically called Kun-tu bzan-po. By implication, there is the usual three principle structure of explanation with regard to the relation between the *sems nyid* (*rtags*), *chos nyid*, the noumenal object of *sems nyid* (*don*) and *nam mkha'*, the simile of *sems nyid* (*dpe*). The text then ends with its colophon.

One might get the impression that this work contains certain ideas that are parallel to those of the school of the simultaneous path (*cig car 'jug pa'i lugs*). However, it would perhaps be too naïve to assume that once mention is made of *mi rtog pa*, it is "influenced by the Ch'an school". It is undeniable that *mi rtgo pa* is taken as the central dogma of the Ch'an school, but it has always been the most important aspect of Buddhist contemplation in general. It is also true that the Ch'an school generally reduces the importance of physical activities in its religious practices, but at the same time it lays strong emphasis on the need of physical discipline with regard to the posture when meditating. As is noted in our text, this is totally rejected as being "a precursor of attachment to the body". On the other hand, there are a certain number of elements which have no parallel in the Ch'an school. Kun-tu bzang-po, the personification of *bodhicitta; boddhicitta*, the noumenal state of *sems nyid; sems nyid*, being the absolute aspect of the mind, and the mind, the "basis of all" (*kun gzhi*) or the "grand father of all" (*spyi mes*). All these point to the predominance of the tantric nature of the rDzogs chen tradition rather than any indication of linkage with the thoughts of the Dhyāna school which is entirely based on sūtras particularly *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. More discussion will be devoted to the relation between these trends of thoughts elsewhere in this work.

### *The identification of the author of the lTa ba rgum chung (T 5920) and the Man ngag rgum chung (T 5922)*

We have already discussed the fact that the above mentioned two works contain a number of verses that can be traced to the *sBas pa'i rgum chung*.

First of all, these two works are parts of the six short texts known as the "Six lamps" (*sGron ma drug*)[21] of gNyan dPal-dbyangs. They are allowed to remain in the *bsTan 'gyur* though Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub does not mention them in his *Chos 'byung*. Pho-brang Zhi-ba-'od in his *bka' shog* considered them as unauthentic.[22] These texts have been noted by G. Tucci who has given brief summaries of them.[23] The summaries, however, hardly accord with the actual contents of the works. For example, the first four verses of the *sBas pa'i rgum chung*, which is incorporated into the *lTa ba rgum chung* towards the end of the text, have not been summarised despite the fact that these four verses constitute the conclusion of the treatise. In the case of the *Man ngag rgum chung*, Professor Tucci summarises only four verses out of thirty-two verses. The summaries therefore have not given a true picture of the content of the works at all. The verses that have been summarised are relatively easy to understand. They are concerned with the posture of meditation. After a brief discussion on the identification of the author of the six treatises, Professor Tucci reaches the conclusion: "We are not yet definitely in the rDzogs chen atmosphere".[24] Indeed, not all of the six treatises are concerned with rDzogs chen doctrines. It must be pointed out that only two of the six are devoted to the doctrines of rDzogs chen, but these two have not been "summarised" fully. The remaining four texts are on the doctrines of the *gSang ba snying po* (*Guhyagarbha*), the principal tantra of the Mahāyoga tantras. The two treatises with which we are concerned have, unlike the others, double titles. The titles ending with the word *rgum chung* were probably the original ones given by the author himself in imitation of the *sBas pa'i rgum chung* and also under these titles they are quoted in *SM* and not the ones ending with the word *sgron ma*. Indeed, in *ThCh*, Rong-zom paṇḍita quotes these works with titles ending *sgron ma*.[25] Apart from the two treatises in question, the remaining four of the six had titles ending with the word *sgron ma*. It was probably a later redactor who put them all together for the sake of conformity and gave new titles such as *mTha'i mun sel sgron*

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[21] i. *Thus kyi sgron ma* (*T* Vol. 150, no. 5918),
ii. *lTa ba yang dag sgron ma* (*T* 5919),
iii. *mTha' yi mun sel sgron ma* or *lTa ba rgum chung* (*T* 5920),
iv. *Thabs shes sgron ma* (*T* 5921),
v. *rNal 'byor spyod pa'i lugs nges pa'i don ji bzhin bsgom thabs* or *Man ngag rgum chung* (*T* 5922),
vi. *lTa ba rin po che sgron ma* (*T* 5923).

[22] Karmay 1980, p. 17, No. 72.

[23] *MBT* II, pp. 143–47.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 150.

[25] *ThCh* ff. 262, 278–79.

*ma* for the *lTa ba rgum chung* and *rNal 'byor spyod pa'i lugs nges pa'i don ji bzhin bsgom thabs kyi sgron ma* for the *Man ngag rgum chung*. It is evident from the title *rNal 'byor spyod pa'i lugs* . . . that the work was at one time considered to be a treatise on the method of meditation according to the Yogācāra system. Indeed, in both Yogācāra and rDzogs chen, mind has the predominance above everything else. rDzogs chen's affiliation to the Vijñānavāda doctrines is quite evident, but later rDzogs chen masters e.g. Klong-chen rab-'byams have denied outright this linkage. We shall have occasion to return to this topic in another section.[26]

Let us now return to the original question which is the identification of the author of the "Six lamps". The name dPal-dbyangs appears with various components in the colophons of the works concerned. It is preceded by the title Ācārya (*slob dpon*) in three colophons[27] and in two colophons as Bod kyi paṇḍita bsNyan dPal-dbyangs,[28] and gNyan dPal-dbyangs,[29] but simply dPal-dbyangs in one colophon.[30] Despite the variations in the titles preceding the personal name, dPal-dbyangs, it seems certain that they all refer to one personage who belongs to the clan gNyan/bsNyan and who apparently was a renowned master learned in Mahāyoga tantras and rDzogs chen doctrines. The fact that this dPal-dbyangs was an adept of the Mahāyoga tantras is proved by the mention of his name in *SM* among the adepts who succeeded in attaining the prescribed goal according to the method of the Mahāyoga tantras.[31] In this regard, more textual evidence can also be brought to bear by the following identification. Among the Tun-huang manuscripts in India Office Library, there is a work entitled *Zhus lan*.[32] In its colophon, it is stated that the work was composed by a Slob-dpon dPal-byams at the behest of his disciple, sNa-nam lDong-khyu. Another copy of the same work is also preserved in the *bsTan-'gyur*[33] with the title *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan* and from the colophon of this copy, it is clear that it is not dPal-byams but dPal-dbyangs. This orthographical variation is further corroborated by the fact that the same work is also quoted in *SM* five times under the title *Zhus lan*. When it is quoted for the first time, it is unmistakably stated as being from *mKhan po dPal-dbyangs kyi man ngag* and this is identified by an interlinear note: *zhus lan*.[34] All the passages that are quoted can also be traced

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[26] See p. 180.
[27] *T* 5919, 5921, 5923.
[28] *T* 5920.
[29] *T* 5922.
[30] *T* 5918.
[31] *SM* p. 278.
[32] *IOL* 470, another manuscript copy exists in the Pelliot collection in Paris, *PT* 837.
[33] *T* Vol. 87, No. 5082.
[34] *SM* pp. 30, 201, 219, 255, 277.

back to the work in question. This work, the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan* is in the form of a dialogue between the author and his disciple as the title *zhus lan* (question and answer) indicates. There are fifty-three questions and answers to them centering upon the essential points in the doctrines and practices of Mahāyoga tantras. The work is extremely important for the understanding not only of the religious ideas of the Tibetans of the ninth century A.D. but also the beginning of the development of the rDzgos chen doctrines.

As seen, gNyan dPal-dbyangs, who is a *slob dpon* as well as a *mkhan po*, is a master of Mahāyoga doctrines. He is one of the earliest masters who seem to have begun to formulate the rDzogs chen doctrines. He is in the habit of incorporating his sources. For example, several verses from the *sBas pa'i rgum chung* are incorporated into his *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan, lTa ba rgum chung* and *Man ngag rgum chung*. However, nothing is known about his life. According to Tāranātha, he lived in Kha-ra sgo-btsun, a district in gTsang where Tāranātha himself was born[35] and gNyan is said to have founded a temple called g.Yung-drung-gi lha-khang in 'Dam-chen.[36]

However, the question whether this gNyan dPal-dbyangs is one and the same as dBa' dPal-dbyangs has up to now gone unresolved. Professor Tucci has not reached any definite conclusion on this subject. He asks the following question: "Are we sure that the author of these treatises is the same dPal-dbyangs, the successor of Śāntarakṣita?"[37] First of all, no Tibetan sources, early or late, state that gNyan dPal-dbyangs succeeded Śāntarakṣita, still less is he one and the same as dBa'/sBa dPal-dbyangs. dPal-dbyangs (Śrīghoṣa), like other Tibetan religious names is a very common one, especially among the Tun-huang manuscripts.[38] Moreover, when the clan names are attached to the personal name, as in the case of dBa' or gNyan, it is self evident that they are names of different personages. As the later Tibetan sources maintain, dBa' dPal-dbyangs succeeded dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po as the second *Rings lugs 'dzin pa* of bSam-yas. The reliability of this tradition is confirmed by a Tun-huang manuscript.[39] In this manuscript dBa' dPal-dbyangs is clearly mentioned just after dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po, the first Tibetan abbot at bSam yas. It is possible that he is identical with dGe-slong dPal-dbyangs, the

[35] *rGyal khams pa ta ra na thas bdag nyid kyi rnam thar nges par brjod pa'i deb gter shin tu zhib mo ma bcos lhug pa'i rtogs brjod* f. 51. Cf. also *bTsun mo bka' thang*, ff. 40b,6–42b,4.

[36] Ne'u Paṇḍita Grags-pa smon-lam blo-gros, (c. 14th century), *sNgon byung gi gtam me tog gi phreng ba, Rare Tibetan historical and literary texts from the library of Tsepon W.D. Shakap-pa*, Calcutta 1974, No. 2, p. 109.

[37] *MBT II*, pp. 20–21.

[38] H. Karmay, *Early Sino-Tibetan Arts*, Warminster, England 1975, pp. 10–14.

[39] *IOL* 689/2, see p. 78.

author of the *gCes pa bsdus pa'i 'phrin yig*[40] which is written primarily to address a king, but whose name is not mentioned. If he was the one who succeeded dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po, the king would be none other than Khri Srong-lde-btsan (742–797). However, the language of the letter does not give one the impression that it is of great antiquity going back to the latter half of the eighth century A.D.

The author of *SM*, too, makes a distinction by mentioning dBa' dPal-dbyangs when quoting from an unidentified work of dBa' dPal-dbyangs[41] and gNyan dPal-dbyangs when discussing Mahāyoga tantric teachings.[42] gNyan dPal-dbyangs, in later sources is considered to be a disciple of Lotsā-ba gNyags Jñānakumāra *alias* Jo-bo Zhang-drung and one of the teachers of gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, the author of *SM*, but no evidence dating back beyond the eleventh century, textual or otherwise, can be found for gNyan dPal-dbyangs' connection with the author of *SM* except that in *SM*, the above mentioned works of gNyan dPal-dbyangs are treated as one of the principal sources. However, if gNyan dPal-dbyangs was a teacher of the author of *SM* as the later tradition maintains, he could have lived towards the end of the ninth century A.D.

*Translation of the introductory part of IOL 594*

(f. 1*a*)

(i) (Author) : the *Byang chub kyi sems* is written by the most learned Sangs-rgyas sbas-pa.
(ii) Category : it belongs to Atiyoga.[43]
(iii) Sources : it is extracted from all the scriptures concerned with the Enlightened Mind.[44]
(iv) Purpose : it is taught to the intelligent adept.

The work is divided into five sections[45] from the beginning to the end.

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[40] *T* Vol. 144, No. 5842; For a brief summary of this work, see *MBT* II, pp. 141–43.

[41] *SM* p. 35: *dba' dpal dbyangs kyi zhal snga nas/ lus la gru'i blo bzhag ste/*. . . This line appears in the *gCes pa sdus pa'i 'phrin yig* as: *lus la glu (gru) yi glo (blo) zhag(bzhag) ste/* (*T* Vol. 144, No. 5842, p. 127–1–4). Apart from this line, the quotations in *SM* do not correspond to the *gCes pa bsdus pa'i 'phrin yig* at all. It therefore suggests that either there is another work of dBa' dPal-dbyangs or there are different versions of the *'phrin yig*.

[42] *SM* pp. 204, 241, 278.

[43] Cf. pp. 172–74.

[44] *Byang chub kyi sems kyi lung* is a certain type of work mostly grouped with Sems sde in later classifications of the rDzogs chen texts. However, it is hard to tell which texts are actually meant here, because most of the texts of Sems sde do not date back beyond the 10th century A.D.

[45] See below.

As for the contents of it, there are the "Six kinds of *jñāna*",[46] the "Five great ones",[47] the "Three true beings".[48]

The metaphorical title of this work is the "Small hidden grain".[49] The subject title is "the Central point of Space". The five sections of this work are:

(i) Homage to the nature of Kun-tu bzang-po.
(ii) Elucidation of the nature of the Enlightened Mind.[50]
(iii) Explanation of the Enlightened Mind being beyond an examplar.
(iv) Demonstration of the "immaculate face" of the sphere of the "Basis of All".[51]
(v) Presentation of the deviation and obscurity.[52]

Now, if we devide the text according to these five points, it is as follows:

(1) The phrase beginning with the words *bCom ldan 'das . . .* to *phyag 'tshal lo/* pays homage.
(2) The verses beginning from *ji tsam* to *mi 'jug go/* explain the nature of the Enlightened Mind.
(3) [53]
(4) The verses beginning with *ji tsam zab mo . . .* up to *rnam par 'gyur ba gzhi ma yin/* demonstrate obscurity and obstacles.[54]
(5) The rest of the verses up to *byang chub rgyu 'bras yongs kyis myed/* show the "immaculate face" of the sphere of the "Basis of All".

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[46] See notes 58–63.

[47] See n. 58.

[48] See n. 58.

[49] This word appears with various spellings: *rgum, sgum* and *dgum*. The dictionary by Chos-grags (Peking 1957) has: *sgum mthu* (*thu ba*), "collecting *rgum*" and is explained by *bza' bya*, "victuals" as *bza' bya bsdogs pa* "preparation of victuals". However, in his *Gangs can bod kyi brda sprod dpag bsam ljon pa'i snye ma* (Delhi 1961, f. 16a) Hor-btsun bsTan-'dzin blo-gros rgya-mtsho (1889–1975) has explained it as *nas rgum bu*, "grain as of barley". It also occurs with a similar definition in another recent work, *Dag yig gsar bsgrigs*, compiled by a bSam-gtan (mTsho sngon, 1979), as *rgum bu* and is explained: *byas za ba'i dngos rdzas* "the substance that is eaten by birds".

[50] *ThCh* (f. 205) explains *byang chub sems kyi rang bzhin* as: "The Enlightened Mind is of non-duality in relation to all elements of the phenomenal existence. It therefore has always been enlightened. Now it can neither be altered by any means nor acquired by any "antidote". It is already achieved spontaneously" (*phyi nang snang srid kyi chos thams cad gnyis su med pa'i byang chub kyi sems/ snying po byang chub kyi rang bzhin du gdod ma nyid nas sangs rgyas te/ da lam gyis bcos shing gnyen pos sgrub du myed de brtsal ba myed par lhun gyis grub pa'o/*).

[51] Cf. p. 178.

[52] Usually abbreviated as *gol sgrib*. In *TY* (p. 169) it is explained as: *'og mar gol ba'i gol sa*—"deviation to a lower level"; *gong ma mthong ba'i sgrib pa*—"obscuring one's vision of the upper level". There are thirty kinds of *gol sgrib* (*ThCh* f. 90a,b).

[53] There should be some verses devoted to the subject of *byang chub sems kyi dpe mi dmigs pa* in this context, but there are none. Something seems to be missing. Yet the main text itself is complete even though divided according to divisions: 1, 2, 4 and 5 as it is.

[54] Here the terms *sgrib pa* and *gags* have a similar connotation to that of *gol sgrib*, see note 52.

*Translation of the main text of IOL 594, i.e. the sBas pa'i rgum chung*

(f. 1*b*) Homage[55] to the most holy[56] and glorious Kun-tu bzang-po.[57]
(1) How much does a deep non-imagination,[58]
(2) Appear as an object of the intellect?[59]
(3) The experience of the profound non-imagination[60]
(4) Is of experience, not imagination.[61]

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[55] From now on there are interlinear notes in the manuscript and these will be noted down with the word *mchan*. In most of the cases if the *mchan* is above the verse it is indicated with A and if below the verse with B. The expression *phyag 'tshal lo* is explained by the note as: *ji bzhin pa'i klong du gyur ba la phyag zhes bya—phyag* means that which has become the realm of "that which is just so". On the term *ji bzhin pa*, Cf. p. 49.

[56] *mchan* below the word *bcom: bdud bzhi nyid*, hence *bdud bcom*—"vanquishing the *mārā."* Another *mchan* below the word *ldan: byang chub* hence *byang chub ldan*—"possessing enlightenment". Yet another *mchan* below the word *'das*: *'du 'bral myed pa*—"neither integration nor disintegration".

[57] *mchan* A: *bskyed rdzogs dang tshig dang yi ge las 'das pa'o/*—"he who transcends the stages of *utpannakrama, saṃpannakrama*, terminology and letters".

[58] There are three *mchan*. The one above the verse reads: *chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa'i ye shes* (*dharmadhātuviśuddhi Mvy* 110), the first of the five *jñāna*. The 5 verses (i.e. Nos. 1–5) have each of the five *jñāna* in *mchan*. They are symbolical rather than having anything to do with the actual meaning of the verses concerned. The *mchan* below the verse: Kun-tu bzang-mo, as below the second verse Kun-tu bzang-po. Kun-tu bzang-po, Kun-tu bzang-mo and *gNyis su med pa byang chub kyi sems* are known as *yin pa gsum*, the "Three true beings", see p. 130. Yet another *mchan* below the verse states: *che ba rnam lngar sbyar*—"pair (these verses, i.e. Nos. 1–5) also with the "Five *che ba*", i.e. each of the first five verses of the text represents one of the "Five *che ba*", but the five are not given. Here again it is purely a question of "representation", *che ba* here is to be understood in the sense of *byang chub sems kyi che ba*, the "greatness of *bodhicitta*", see p. 114, n. 40.

[59] *mchan* A: *me long lta bu'i ye shes* (*ādarśa-jñāna, Mvy* 111) *mchan* B: Kun-tu bzang-po (see n. 58).

[60] *mchan* A: *mnyam pa nyid kyi* (*ye shes*) (*samatā-jñāna, Mvy* 112); *mchan* B: *gnyis su myed pa'i byang chub kyi sems*, one of the *yin pa gsum*, see n. 58. Another *mchan* below the words *nyams myong na* says: *bde ba chen po* (*mahāsukha*) "great bliss", i.e. experiencing the "Great bliss".

[61] *mchan* A: *so sor rtogs pa* (*'i ye shes*) (*pratyavekṣanā-jñāna, Mvy* 113); below the word *myong ba* the *mchan* reads: *myi rtog pa chen po* which means that what is experienced is *mi rtog pa*, "non-imagination" which in tantric terms would be *bde ba chen po*.

These four verses (nos. 1–4) occur in a slightly different form quoted in *SM* (p. 463) from a work entitled *Sems bsgom pa'i rgyud:*

*ji tsam rtag(rtog) tu med pa'i zab mo zhig/*
*blo'i ngang du gsal bar de zhen na/*
*gang la mi rtog zab mo'i don myong ba/*
*myong ba yin phyir de ni rtog pa yin(min!)/*

The text *Sems bsgom pa'i rgyud* for the present remains unidentified, but the version of the verses it contains gives the impression that it is a recension of our text of the Tunhuang manuscript. However, the last verse here ends in the affirmative rather than negative. Rong-zom Paṇḍita agrees with the *Sems bsgom pa'i rgyud* in stating that "experience" is a kind of "conscious thought" (*rtog pa*) and he explains the verses (i.e. Nos. 1–4) thus: "one asserts that there is a time when one experiences the sense of the profound "non-imagination", but one has no means of demonstrating it to others. That is so, but since experience is merely a "conscious thought", that cannot be described as "seeing the truth"

(5) All phenomena possess "suchness".[62]
(6) Phenomenal existence does not follow itself.[63]
(7) However profound the words one utters,[64]
(8) One cannot express the point.[65]
(9) The activities of accumulation of merit, both physical and spiritual,[66]
(10) The practice of contemplation, and purification of the saṃsāric traces,[67]
(11) All are a "fixing stake".[68] (f. 2*a*)
(12) Intangible space cannot be modified.[69]
(13) Sitting up with legs crossed,[70]
(14) All physical adjustment,[71]

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(on this expression see pp. 111–112). For example, the taste of salt is experienced by men and animals, but to someone who has not tasted it, there is no way of showing him by saying "the taste of salt is like this". Likewise, even though one has tasted the taste of *samādhi*, one cannot show it to others. So the experience cannot be included in the category of the "profundity". It is nothing but imagination (*ThCh* f. 290: *dus gang gi tshe rnam par mi rtog pa'i don zab mo gzhan la bstan pa'i thabs myed pa zhig/ rang gi blos nyams su myong ngo/ de lta yang nyams su myong ba nyid kyi phyir rtog pa zhig tu zad pas/ bden pa mthong ba zhes mi bya'o/ 'di ltar rang gis myong ba gzhan la btsan pa mi nus pa ni mngon sum kun gyi chos nyid yin te/ dper na lan tshva'i ro ni mi dang dud 'gro phal mo ches kyang thun mong du nyams su myong ba yin mod kyi/ 'on kyang lan tshva'i ro ma myong ba zhig la/ lan tshva'i ro ni 'di 'dra'o zhes bstan pa'i thabs ni myed do/ de bzhin du rang la ting nge 'dzin gyi ro myong ba yod na/ gzhan la bstan pa mi nus kyang/ zab mo'i grangs su mi chud de rnam par rtogs(rtog) pa zhig tu zad do/*)

[62] *mchan* above the verses: *bya ba nan tan* (*gyi ye shes*) (*kṛityānuṣṭana-jñāna, Muy* 114); *mchan* below the word *ji bzhin pa* reads: *rig pa'i rgyal po rang lags te gzhan las mi 'byung*—"one is oneself, the king of the intellect (i.e. *ji bzhin pa*, "that which is just so") and that does not originate in others.

[63] *mchan* A: *stong pa chen po* (*'i ye shes*). This sixth *jñāna* is not in *Muy*. This verse remains totally obscure as to the sense, hence the translation is merely provisional.

[64] *mchan* B: *lus(lung) dang man ngag sde snod*—"inspired teachings, precepts and scriptures", i.e. all these are not much use for bringing about the realisation of the rDzogs chen principle.

[65] *mchan* B: *byang chub sems dang gol sa*—"the Enlightened Mind and deviation", Cf. n. 52.

[66] *mchan* B: *'di man chad sgrib pa dang gags ston*—"from here onwards, obscurity and obstacles are presented, i.e. from verse No. 9.

[67] *mchan* B: *bsam gtan gyi bde ro bde ba'*—"the taste of the bliss of contemplation".

[68] *mchan* B: *gzungs 'dzin gyi mtha' ste byang chub kyi sems dang gol sa* "the extremity of the object and subject (*grāhya, grāha*), (betokening) the Enlightened Mind and deviation from it (Cf. n. 52). This verse is incorporated into the *Man ngag rgum chung* and is also quoted in *SM* (pp. 404, 405). A somewhat more precise explanation of the phrase *'dzin pa'i phur pa* is given in *SM* (p. 443): *sgo gsum ched du 'chos shing rtsol ba ni/ 'dzin pa'i phur pa dang sgrib pa yin/*—"to strive and correct in serving the three components of being (*viz.* body, speech and mind) constitutes the "fixed post" and "obscurity". In another place of the same work (*SM* p. 444) it is stated: *bcos su med pa la bcos pa nyid/ rtog pa'i 'dzin pa dang phur pa'o/*—"to alter that which cannot be altered constitutes the fixed post of conscious thought".

[69] *mchan* B: *bya brtsal dang bral ba*, usually abbreviated as *bya bral*. On this see, p. 112.

[70] *mchan* B: *drang srong dang bsam gtan*—"*ṛiṣi* and those (who practise) *dhyāna* meditation". The *ṛiṣi* and those who practise Dhyāna (Ch'an) attach great importance to the physical posture when meditating whereas in rDzogs chen one does not, see p. 84, *ll.* 13–15; 119.

[71] *mchan* B: *rab tu 'byung ba dang dka' thub la stsogs pa*—"monks and those who practise austerity, etc." This note is actually a continuation of the previous one, see n. 64.

(15) Derives from attachment to the body.[72]
(16) Formless space cannot be modified.[73]
(17) That which exists from the beginning, like space,[74]
(18) Does not sit up with legs crossed.[75]
(19) Just as the nature of oneself remains in a space-like state,[76]
(20) It is the basis for transforming into space.[77]
(21) So is mental space,[78]
(22) the basis of acquiring Enlightenment.[79]
(23) The mind that has no roots,[80]
(24) Cannot be searched for and found. It is like space.[81]
(25) The unborn Enlightenment,[82] (f. 2*b*)
(26) Is devoid of cause and effect.[83]

The most profound precept, the "Small hidden grain", the key to the scriptures and precepts.[84]. The end.

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[72] *mchan* B: *nga dang bdag*—"I and self", i.e. physical activities come about from the attachment to oneself.

[73] *mchan* B: *rgyu 'bras gnyis ka byang chub chen po*—"The sublime Enlightenment is there in both (the stages of) cause and effect". This *mchan* has no relation, it seems to me, to the verse.

*mchan* A: *dge sdig*—"virtue and vice". The verses Nos. 13–16 are incorporated into the *Man ngag rgum chung*, see p. 85, *ll*, 13–16.

[74] *mchan* B: *bdal ba chen po*—"great expansion" i.e. space.

[75] *mchan* B: *Kun-tu bzang-po*, i.e. since one is oneself in effect a *Kun-tu bzang-po*.

[76] *mchan* B: *rtogs pa'i ye shes*—"the primordial intellect".

[77] *mchan* B: *spros pa dang bral ba* (*nisprapañca*) "without form", "without extension". The word *gzhi ma* designates "basis", "foundation". It often occurs in *KG* (f. 69): *nga ni chos kyi gzi ma yin/ nga ni chos kyi rtsa ba yin/* (See also f. 139–40).

[78] *mchan* B: *kun gzhi chos nyid*—"the reality of the "Basis of All", i.e. *sems nyid*. There is a further note which reads *bdus drangs*, but whose sense remains unknown.

[79] *mchan* A: *brtsal sems dang bral ba*—"without a mind that searches", i.e. one must not search. Searching is considered to be an obstacle, *KG* (f. 67): *lta yul gang yang mthong ba med/ des na btsal ba'i las ma byed/*.

[80] *mchan* B: *thog ma dang tha ma dang dbu ma dang mtha' myed pa'o/* "No beginning and no end; without middle and edge".

[81] *mchan* B: *ri dags(dvags) smug(smig) rgyu snyog pa (dang 'dra)*—"(like) a wild animal following a mirage", *mchan* B: *mye 'is(yis) chu gsod pa dang 'dra*—"it is like trying to kill water with fire".

[82] *mchan* B: *kun tu bzang po'i rang bzhin la/*—being in the nature of Kun-tu bzang-po.

[83] *mchan* B: *sa dang sa'i khyad par dge sdig mtho ris dang thar ba'i* (*khyad par med*)—"(The Enlightenment is devoid of any causes, such as): the distinction between various stages, virtue and vice, the heaven (*svarga*) and liberation (*mokṣa*)".

[84] *mchan* B: *so mangs dang pho bsnyung dang 'dra/*—"like a comb and a *pho bsnyung*". The sense of the word *pho bsnyung* is not clear. It is however attested at least in two other works in a similar context. *gZer mig* (Vol. II, f. 863,1): *dngul dkar pho snyung 'dis/ yid kyi dbang po dbye zhing . . ./*—"With this silver *pho snyung*, one opens the heart" . . ./ In *GCh* (Vol. 4, p. 473) it is used as: *man ngag spyi yi rgya mdud 'di/ blo dman rnams kyis mi khrol ba/ pho snyung 'dra ba'i lta bas bkrol/*—"The knot of precepts cannot be undone by the unintelligent. (But) here they are explained with theories which are like a *pho snyung*". It is therefore an instrument similar to a key.

*Transliteration of the Tibetan text*

*IOL* 594 (Ch. 73 III 21 [20] 576)

(Part I)

(Fol. 1*a*, line 1) byang chub kyi sems 'di slob[a] dpon ni mkhyen rab kyi mchog sangs rgyas sbas pas mdzad do/ phyogs ni a ti yo gar gtogs so/ khungs ni byang chub kyi sems kyi lung (*l.* 2) thams chad nas phyung ngo/ don ched ni blo yang rab kyi don ched du bka' stsal to/ mgo mjug du don rnam pa lngas ston to/ sgo tshogs[b] ni ye shes drug dang/ che ba rnam pa lnga dang/ (*l.* 3) de kho na nyid yin pa rnam gsum gyis ston to/ byang chub kyi sems 'di dpe las mtshan du gsol ba ni/ sbas pa'i rgum chung ngo/ don las mtshan du gsol ba ni nam mkha'i[c] (*l.* 4) thig le'o/ de la don rnam pa lnga ni/ kun tu bzang po'i[d] rang bzhin la phyag 'tshal bar bstan pa dang gcig[e]/ byang chub kyi sems kyi rang bzhin (*l.* 5) bstan pa dang gnyis/ byang chub kyi sems kyi dpe mi dmyigs par bstan pa dang gsum/ kun gzhi mkha' dbyings rnam par dag pa'i[f] ngo bstan pa dang bzhi/ byang chub kyi (*l.* 6) sems kyi gol sa dang sgrib pa bstan pa dang lnga'o/ de la dkyus dang sbyar te sa gcad[g] na/ bcom ldan 'das zhes bya ba nas phyag 'tshal lo zhes bya ba'i (*l.* 7) bar gyis ni phyag 'tshal bar bstan to/ ji tsam zhes bya ba nas chos la ni mi 'jug go zhes bya ba'i bar gyis ni/ byang chub sems kyi rang bzhin bstan to/ ji tsam zab mo (*l.* 8) zhes bya ba nas/ nam mkhar[h] 'gyur ba'i gzhi ma yin zhes bya ba'i bar gyis ni/ sgrib pa dang gags bstan to/ de nas byang chub rgyu 'bras yongs kyis myed ces pa (*l.* 9) yan chad kyis ni/ kun gzhi nam mkha' dbyings rnam par dag pa'i ngo bstan pa'o//

(Part II)

(Fol. 1*b, l.* 1) bcom ldan 'das dpal kun tu bzang po la phyag 'tshal lo/[1]
(1) ji tsam rtog myed zab mo zhig/[2] (*l.* 2)
(2) blo'i yul du snang zhe[i] na/[3]

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[a] slobs—[b] gtshogs—[c] ga—[d] po'o—[e] cig—[f] par—[g] chad—[h] khar—[i] absent, Cf. p. 83, *l.* 38.

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[1] *mchan* A: bskyed rdzogs dang tshig dang yi ge las 'das pa'o/
*mchan* B: bdud bzhi nyid + byang chub + 'du 'bral myed pa' + ji bzhin ba'i klung(klong) du gyur pa la phyag bya zhes
[2] *mchan* A: chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa'i ye shes
*mchan* B: kun tu bzang mo + che ba rnam lngar yang sbyar
[3] *mchan* A: mye long lta bu'i ye shes
*mchan* B: kun tu bzang po

(3) myi rtog zab mo nyams myong ba/[4]
(4) myong ba yin phyir de nyid myin/[5]
(5) ji bzhin ba'i (*l.* 3) chos brtsad de/[6]
(6) chos la chos ni myi 'jug pas/[7]
(7) ji tsam zab mo'i tshig brjod kyang/[8]
(8) don dang 'tsham (*l.* 4) bar ga la 'gyur/[9]
(9) bsod nams ye shes stsogs pa dang/[10]
(10) ting 'dzin bag chags sbyong ba dag/[11]
(11) 'dzin pa'i phur pa (Fol. 2*a, l.* 1) de na yod/[12]
(12) 'dzin myed mkha' la bcos[j] myed na/[13]
(13) dkyil dkrung drang 'dug bcas pa dang/[14]
(14) lus kyi bcos (*l.* 2) pa thams chad kyang/[15]
(15) lus rtog mngon bar zhen[k] las byung/[16]
(16) lus myed mkha' la bcos su myed/[17]
(17) nam mkha' (*l.* 3) lta bur ye gnas la/[18]
(18) dkyil dkrung[l] drang 'dug[m] bcas pa myed/[19]
(19) rang bzhin nam mkhar[n] gnas pa la/[20] (*l.* 4)
(20) nam mkhar[o] 'gyur ba'i gzhi ma yin/[21]
(21) sems nyid nam mkha'[p] byang chub dbyings/[22]

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[j] bchos—[k] zhel—[l] krung—[m] gdug—[n] kar—[o] khar—[p] ka

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[4] *mchan* A: mnyam pa nyi kyi
*mchan* B: gnyis su myed pa'i byang chub kyi sems + bde ba chen po
[5] *mchan* A: so sor rtogs pa
*mchan* B: myi rtog pa chen po
[6] *mchan* A: bya ba nan tan
*mchan* B: rig pa'i rgyal po rang la gnas te
[7] *mchan* A: stong pa chen po'i
*mchan* B: gzhan las myi 'byung
[8] *mchan* B: lus(lung) dang man gnag + sde snod
[9] *mchan* B: byang chub sems dang gol sa
[10] *mchan* B: 'di man chad sgrib pa dang gags ston/ 'dus byas
[11] *mchan* B: bsam gtan gyi bde ro bde ba'
[12] *mchan* B: gzung 'dzin gyi mtha' ste byang chub kyi sems dang gol sa
[13] *mchan* B: bya brtsal dang bral ba
[14] *mchan* B: drang srong dang bsam gtan
[15] *mchan* B: rab du(tu) 'byung ba dang dka' thub la stsogs pa'
[16] *mchan* B: nga dang bdag
[17] *mchan* A: dge sdig
*mchan* B: rgyu 'bras gnyis ka byang chub chen po
[18] *mchan* B: bdal pa chen po
[19] *mchan* B: kun tu bzang po
[20] *mchan* B: rtogs pa'i ye shes
[21] *mchan* B: spros pa dang bral ba'
[22] *mchan* B: kun gzhi chos nyid + bdus drangs(?)

(22) byang chub sgrub pa'i gzhi ma (*l.* 5) yin/[23]
(23) gzhi rtsa myed pa'i sems nyid la/[24]
(24) btsal bas myi rnyed nam mkha'[q] 'dra/[25]
(25) skye dang bral ba'i byang chub la/[26] (2*b*, *l.* 1)
(26) byang chub rgyu 'bras yongs kyis myed/[27]
lung dang man ngag gi lde myig man ngag bla na myed pa sbas pa'i rgum chung//[28] rdzogs sho//

[q] ka

[23] *mchan* B: brtsal sems dang bral ba
[24] *mchan* B: thog ma dang tha ma dang dbu ma dang mtha' myod(myed) do/
[25] *mchan* B: mye 'is(yis) chu gsod pa dang 'dra + ri dags(dvags) smug(smig) rgyu snyog pa'
[26] *mchan* B: kun tu bzang po'i rang bzhin la
[27] *mchan* B: sa dang sa'i khyad par dge sdig mtho ris dang thar pa'
[28] *mchan* B: so mangs dang pho bsnyung dang 'dra/

## Tun-huang document No. III (IOL 689/2)

This Tun-huang manuscript simply contains four different lists of abbots or teachers in two religious establishments, *viz.* bSam-yas and 'Phrul-snang[1], and in three other places, *viz.* mDo-gams(= Amdo), Kam-cu[2] and Gong-cu.[3] While bSam-yas and 'Phrul-snang are well known, the manuscript does not give any specific names of the religious centres (*chos grva*) in the other named regions.

Here it is not intended to make a historical study of the places mentioned above. That would be outside the scope of the present undertaking and they are mostly well known elsewhere. I therefore limit myself to the analysis of the content of the manuscript which has a direct connection with some masters of the rDzogs chen tradition.

However, I believe, the manuscript itself is very important for the study of the history of bSam-yas. It is the only Tun-huang document which not only mentions bSam-yas but also gives a list of its successive abbots. The existence of other documents like this, ancient or late having a similar content, so far is not attested. The manuscript is therefore unique in its importance.

[1] The full name of Jo-khang in Lhasa is Ra-sa'i 'phrul-snang gtsug-lag-khang, *KhG* f. 109 (Richardson 1980, p. 65).
[2] Kam-chu, a region in Kan-su fell under Tibet in 766 A.D. Demieville 1952, p. 171; Richardson 1977, p. 223.
[3] I am unable to identify this place.

The teachers of bSam-yas and 'Phrul-snang are described as *dGe ba'i bshes gnyen* whereas the teachers in other places simply *Slob dpon*. The ancient official title of the abbot of bSam-yas is *bCom ldan 'das kyi ring lugs* or just *Ring lugs*,[4] but these are not mentioned here. The author of the text makes it clear that the work is concerned with successive teachers, and not a simple list of a group of people, by the use of the term *brgyud* "lineage"[5] in the case of each of the four lists. The fact that it is concerned with succession is also proved by the occurrence of the name dBa' dPal-dbyangs just after the name dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po, the first Tibetan abbot of bSam-yas. The later accounts also agree with this.[6]

The only odd figure in the list is the ninth, lHa-lung dPal-gyi rdo-rje. This personage is usually given in later sources as the murderer of King Glang Dar-ma, and it is known that the murder took place in 842 A.D. Only three persons belonging to the family Cog ro are given after him in the list. There could not, at any rate, be many more successions after him, because of Glang Dar-ma's persecution of the Buddhist monastic establishment. The composition of the text may not therefore be ascribed to any date prior to 875 A.D.

There is no way to determine how long each abbot occupied the seat. There are all together twelve persons starting from dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po in the list. If the construction of the bSam yes temple was completed around 779 A.D.[7] dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po could have become its abbot not very long after this date, because Śāntarakṣita died soon after the completion of the construction. Therefore, nine abbots occupied the seat during about sixty-three years between 779 and 842 A.D. According to later accounts, lHa-lung dPal-gyi rdo-rje was simply a hermit practising tantric meditation in the hermitage of Yer-ba at the time of the persecution,[8] but no mention is made of the fact that he had been an abbot of bSam-yas nor do any of the later sources state who was the abbot of bSam-yas during this particular period. Glang Dar-ma was not so totally anti-Buddhist as later Buddhist historians would like to paint him. During his reign and that of his son, Khri 'Od-srung, Buddhism was a flourishing religion in Tibet. This fact is attested in another Tun-huang document which I published elsewhere.[9] What Glang Dar-ma did was to

[4] *GB* p. 73–4–5; *PT* 849 (Hackin 1924, p. 36); *BZh* p. 53; *KhG* f. 114a, 4, 129b, 2.
[5] The expression *dge ba'i bshes gnyen gyi rgyud*(*brgyud*) with the same meaning as the "lineage of teachers" also occurs in *PT* 699 where a series of teachers of Tshig-tsa Nam-mkha'i snying-po is given (Lalou 1939, pp. 506, 518).
[6] *BZh* p. 54; *KhG* f. 114b, 6.
[7] The latest suggestion of the date (Richardson 1980, p. 63).
[8] E.g. *KhG* f. 137b, 5.
[9] *PT* 840 (Karmay 1981, pp. 207–10).

dismantle the established monastic system which in his time had already become a social and financial burden to the State. Such a policy and action would of course distress and anger in the person of the abbot of bSam-yas, whose authority depended entirely on the State for its existence. It is therefore quite plausible that the abbot of bSam-yas would want to destroy the king once and for all. The later Buddhist historians probably did not wish to disparage their patriarchs by disclosing the fact that it was one of the abbots of bSam-yas who was the murderer of the king and so brought the line of their most cherished royal patronage to an end.

### *Translation of the text, IOL 689/2*

(Fol. 116*b*) The list of the lineage of teachers who were born in Tibet. As for the disciples of the Indian abbot, the Bodhisattva,[10] etc. are:

I. (1) Ye-shes dbang-po, the monk of the dBa' family.
(2) dPal-dbyangs of dBa'.[11]
(3) rGyal-ba mchog-dbyang of Ngan-lam.[12]
(4) rDo-rje rgyal-po of 'Go-'bom.[13]
(5) gSal-rab rin-po-che of 'Jeng.
(6) mChog-rab gzhon-nu of Myang.
(7) . . . myi[14] go-cha of Myang.
(8) gZhon-nu snying-po of Gle'u.[15]
(9) dPal-gyi rdo-rje of lHa-lung.
(10) dPal-gyi seng-ge of Cog-ro.
(11) Byams-pa'i seng-ge of Cog-ro.
(12) Chos-kyi bshes-gnyen of Cog-ro, etc.

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[10] I.e. Zhi-ba-'tsho (Śāntarakṣita) *alias* Chos zhi-ba'i-dbyangs (Dharma-śāntighoṣa), *bKa' yang dag pa'i tshad ma* (*T* Vol. 144, No 5839, p. 94–1–8; Stein 1980, p. 331); Tāranātha, *rGya gar chos 'byung*, Varanasi 1971, p. 192.

[11] *KhG* f. 114b; Cf. also *MBT* II, p. 41.

[12] According to *BZh* (p. 51) he was one of the first seven monks ordained at bSam-yas by Śāntarakṣita. For a short account, see *TTGL* p. 61. The family Ngan-lam was very important. It produced the famous minister sTag-sgra klu-khong (Richardson 1952, p. 1 et seq).

[13] An ancient family name, Cf. below number 3 of list IV; *BZh* p. 54. Is he identical with 'Bog rDo-rje rgyal-po of *PT* 849 (Hackin 1924, p. 36)?

[14] The manuscript has something like *gkhan* which is probably an error for *mkhan*. One of the followers of Hva-shang Mahāyāna called Myang Sha-mi is mentioned in *BZh* p. 57.

[15] This family name is probably the same as Le'u which produced two ministers (the *bka' gtsigs* of Khri lDe-srong-btsan, *KhG* f. 130a,4, 130b,3). This personage is presented as one who followed the Cig car ba tradition (*SM* pp. 148, 150).

These are the teachers of bSam-yas including 'Phrul-snang.[16]

II. The teachers of the religious centre in mDo-gams.[17]
(1) Shes-rab zla-ba of Vang.
(2) Kun-dga'-dpal of 'Dan-ma.
(3) dGa'-ldan byang-chub of Nem etc.
are the teachers of the lineage in mDo-gams.

III. The teachers of the religious centre in Kam-cu:
(1) Byang-chub rin-chen of dBas.[18]
(2) dGe-lam of An.
(3) Dam-mtsho of Lang-'gro.[19]
(4) rNal-'byor-sbyor of Ce-zi.
(5) 'Phru-ma-legs, etc.
are the teachers of the northern lineage.

IV. The teachers of the religious centre in Gong-cu:
(1) Rin-chen byang-chub of Myang.
(2) 'Jam-pa'i snying-po of Zha-snga.
(3) Sa-mun-tra of 'Go-'bom.
(4) dGe'i blo-gros of 'Greng-ro.
(5) dGe-rgyas of Phung, etc.
are the teachers of the lineage in Gong-cu.

[16] The manuscript does not distinguish which persons were teachers of 'Phrul-snang. I therefore presume that some of them were the teachers at 'Phrul-snang before they became abbots or after ceasing to be abbots of bSam-yas or at the same time.
[17] mDo-khams.
[18] Interchangeable with dBa'.
[19] Or Lang-gro, an old family who held a ministerial post (the *bka' gtsigs* of Khri lDe-srong-btsan, *KhG* f. 130b,3; *BZh* p. 16). Another personage of this family is mentioned in *PT* 699: Lang-'gro dKon-mchog 'byung-gnas who is considered to be an adept of the Cig car ba tradition (*SM* pp. 150, 169), but in later rNying ma pa school, he is one of the twenty-five disciples of Padmasambhava (*o rgyan rje 'bangs nyer lnga*).

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## *Transliteration of the Tibetan text*

*IOL* 689/2 (Vol. 31 [e] Ch. 0021)

(Fol. 116*b*) bod yul du byung ba'i dge ba'i bshes gnyen gyi[1]
(b) rgyud kyi rnam[2] grangs la/ rgya gar gyi[3] mkhan po bo de sva dva las stsgos[4] pa'i slob ma ni/
(1) dba' btsun pa ye shes dbang po
(2) dba' dpal dbyangs

[1] gi—[2] rnams—[3] gi—[4] bstsogs

(3) ngan lam rgyal ba[5] mchog dbyangs
(4) 'go 'bom rdo rje rgyal po
(5) jeng gsal rab rin po che
(6) myang mchog rab gzhon nu
(7) myang mkhan[6] myi go cha
(8) gle'u gzhon[7] nu snying po
(9) lha lung dpal gyi[8] rdo rje
(10) cog[9] ro dpal gyi seng ge
(11) cog ro byams pa'i seng ge
(12) cog ro chos kyi bshes gnyen
de las sogs[10] pa ni bsam yas dang 'phrul snang yan chad kyi dge ba'i bshes gnyen[11] lags so/

mdo gams chos grva'i[12] slob[13] dpon
(1) vang shes rab zla ba
(2) 'dan ma kun dga' dpal
(3) nem dga' ldan byang chub
las sogs[14] pa ni mdo gams nas brgyud pa lags so/

kam cu'i chos grva'i slob dpon
(1) dbas byang chub rin chen
(2) an dge lam
(3) lang 'gro dam mtsho
(4) ce zi rnal 'byor sbyor[15]
las sogs[16] pa ni/ byang ngos su brgyud pa lags so/

gong cu'i chos grva'i[17]slob dpon
(1) myang rin chen byang chub
(2) zha snga 'jam pa'i snying po
(3) 'go 'bom sa mun tra
(4) 'greng ro dge'i blo gros
(5) phung dge rgyas
las stsogs[18] ni gong cu nas brgyud pa lags so/

[5] absent—[6] gkhan—[7] gzho—[8] gi—[9] chog—[10] bsog—[11] nyen—[12] gra—[13] slobs—[14] bsog—[15] skyor—[16] bsogs—[17] gra—[18] bstsog

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*Translation of the lTa ba rgum chung or mTha'i mun sel sgron ma (T No. 5920)*

(1) The elements of the phenomenal world are the erring of the mind.
(2) Apart from the mind, there is no real substance.

(3) The elements of the phenomenal world that appear to us are the erring of the mind.
(4) Interdependence and illusion have no origination.

(5) But when one says that there is no origination,
(6) it is to divert one from attachment to real substance.
(7) Illusion, from the beginning, has no origination.
(8) Not even the word "non-origination" is to be applied.

(9) If one says that this sky is non-existent,
(10) A stupid fellow is amazed.
(11) (But) the wise does not hold that it (illusion) existed from the beginning.
(12) He does not say he thinks it non-existent.

(13) As there are no existential elements apart from the mind,
(14) There is no object apart to be meditated upon.
(15) If the mind is originally unproduced,
(16) So how can there be a "meditator"?

(17) If the mind which is the basis of verbal concepts,
(18) Is unproduced and essentially unreal,
(19) How can any terminology apply to what can be contemplated and what can be not,
(20) To what thing can this terminology apply?

(21) The life-series of human beings is not twofold,
(22) It is unproduced and it is not self-conceived,
(23) Since mind is otherwise non-existent,
(24) How can one modify it or stabilze it?

(25) So long as it is conditioned by delusion,
(26) If mind thus manifests itself like a mirage,
(27) There is nothing to be modified by one who knows,
(28) And for the ignorant it is like modifying a mirage.

(29) Minds which lack the characteristic of non-discrimination,
(30) Cannot be stabilized in the non-characteristic of non-discrimination.
(31) If it cannot be stabilized as uncharacterized,
(32) How much the less can it be stabilized with characteristics.

(33) It cannot be worked upon; it cannot be stabilized,
(34) Since, like space, it lacks constituents.
(35) Mental concentration which has its source in such constituents is a defect.
(36) It is undefiled by all and everything.

(37) If one asks how (a state of) profound non-discrimination
(38) Becomes manifest in the mental sphere.
(39) It arises as an experience of profound non-discrimination,
(40) And since it is experience, it is (not even) that (*viz.* non-discrimination).
"The little grain of the view", (or) "The lamp that removes the darkness of the extremity". Composed by the paṇḍita of Tibet, Ācārya gNyan dPal-dbyangs.

*Transliteration of the Tibetan text (T No. 5920)*

(p. 234–4–6)
(1) chos rnams sems kyi 'khrul ba ste/
(2) sems las ma gtogs[1] chos rnams med/
(3) chos su snang ba 'khrul ba'i sems/
(4) rten 'brel sgyu ma skye ba med/

(5) skye ba med ces bstan pa'ang/
(6) dngos po 'dzin pa bzlog phyir te/
(7) sgyu ma ye nas skye med la/
(8) skye med snyad kyi sgra mi gdags/

(9) nam mkha' 'di ni med do zhes/
(10) blun po gang zhig rtog par byed/
(11) mkhas pas[2] sngon nas yod mi 'dzin/
(12) med par mi rtog tshig mi brjod/

(13) sems las ma gtogs[3] chos med phyir/
(14) bsgom bya'i chos nyid gud na med/
(15) sems kyang ye nas ma skyes na/
(16) sgom[4] pa po'ang ga[5] la yod/

(17) brjod pa'i rtsa ba sems nyid ni/
(18) ma skyes dngos gzhi yod min na/
(19) sgom[6] dang sgom[7] du med pa yi/
(20) tha snyad gang zhig gang la 'jug/

(21) 'gro la sems rgyud gnyis mi 'chang/
(22) de ni ma skyes rang ma dmigs/
(23) de las gzhan pa'i sems med phyir/
(24) bcos shing gnas pa gang zhig yod/

(25) 'khrul rtog rkyen dang ldan gyi bar/
(26) smig[8] rgyu bzhin du sems snang na/

[1] rtogs—[2] pa—[3] rtogs—[4] bsgom[5] gang—[6] bsgom—[7] bsgom—[8] dmigs

(27) rang bzhin shes pas bcos su med/
(28) mi shes smig[9] rgyu bcos pa bzhin/

(29) mi rtog mtshan med sems rnams kyis/
(30) mi rtog[10] mtshan[11] med la'ang gnas mi byed/
(31) mtshan ma med la mi gnas na/
(32) mtshan mar gnas pa smos ci dgos/

(33) bsgrub pa med cing gnas pa med/
(34) 'du byed med pa mkha' 'dra bas/
(35) 'du byed las byung bsam gtan skyon/
(36) ma lus kun gyis gos pa med/

(37) ji ltar rtog med zab mo zhig/
(38) blo yi yul du snang zhe na/
(39) mi rtog zab mo[12] nyams myong ba/
(40) myong ba yin phyir de nyid min/

lta ba rgum[13] chung/ mtha'i mun sel sgron ma/ bod kyi paṇḍita a tsa rya gnyan[14] dpal dbyangs kyis mdzad pa'o///

[9] dmigs—[10] rtogs—[11] mtshan ma—[12] mo'i—[13] dgum—[14] bsnyan

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*Translation of the rNal 'byor spyod pa'i lugs nges pa'i don la ji bzhin bsgom thabs or Man ngag rgum chung (T No. 5922)*

(1) The elements of the phenomenal world are in the state of "that which is just so".
(2) They cannot be perceived by themselves.
(3) However profound the words one utters,
(4) They cannot express the point correctly.
(5) The mind does not remain in anything,
(6) And does not conceive anything.
(7) The error that is to be removed lies in the conception that the mind remains somewhere.
(8) Within this error also lies the "subtle holding" of the mind.
(9) If the mind exists only like a mirage,
(10) Why then does one say that the mind does not remain in anything and conceive anything?
(11) To say to space, you must not reside anywhere,
(12) Is a meaningless order.

(13) Similarly, sitting upright with legs crossed,
(14) All these physical modifications,
(15) Originate in attachment to the body.
(16) The formless sky cannot be modified.

(17) If one understands the body as illusion,
(18) No activities such as sitting upright are needed.
(19) In whatever of the three modes of life (*viz.* eating, sleeping, moving about), one is in,
(20) No action is to be taken, none is being taken.

(21) The body and the mind have no origination and have no basis.
(22) Like the sky, no words can be uttered which will modify them.
(23) If one tries to modify them,
(24) There is the "fixed post".

(25) Just as the sky is without attribute,
(26) And is devoid of any cause,
(27) So is the mental sky,
(28) Which is naturally to be viewed in this way.

(29) Similarly the body, etc. are also
(30) Devoid of striving.
(31) There is no repose either.
(32) All this is quite beyond contradiction.

"Meditation on the truth according to the method of Yogacārā system" *alias* "The Little grain of precepts". Composed by gNyan dPal-dbyangs.

*Transliteration of the Tibetan text (T No. 5922)*

(p. 235–1–8)
rnal 'byor spyod pa'i lugs nges pa'i don la ji bzhin bsgom thabs kyi sgron ma/
(1) ji bzhin pa yi chos brtsan par/
(2) chos la chos ni mi 'jug ste/
(3) ji tsam zab pa'i tshig brjod kyang/
(4) don dang mthun par mi 'gyur ro/
(5) sems ni ci la'ang mi gnas dang/
(6) ci la'ang mi dmigs shes bya ba/
(7) sems la gnas dmigs skyon sel ba'i/
(8) sems 'dzin phra mo de la yod/
(9) smig[1] rgyu bzhin du sems med na/

[1] dmigs

(10) mi gnas mi dmigs byed pa gang/
(11) nam mkha' rang la ma[2] gnas shes/
(12) bsgo[3] ba don dang ldan ma yin/

(13) de bzhin dkyil[4] dkrung drang 'dug dang/
(14) lus kyi bcos pa thams cad kyang/
(15) lus rtog mngon par zhen las byung/
(16) lus med mkha' la bcos su med/

(17) sgyu ma bzhin du lus shes na/
(18) drang 'dug dkyil[5] dkrung 'cha' ba med/
(19) spyod lam gsum gyis gnas pa gang/
(20) ched du bya med byed pa'ang med/

(21) lus sems ma skyes gzhi med pa/
(22) mkha' ltar bcos pa'i kha na med/
(23) tshad mar lus sems 'chos byed pa/
(24) 'dzin pa'i phur pa de la yod/

(25) ji ltar mtshan med nam mkha' ni/
(26) dmigs dang dmigs med rtsol dang bral/
(27) de bzhin sems nyid nam mkha' yang/
(28) rang bzhin nyid kyis de lta'o/

(29) lus la sogs kyang de bzhin te/
(30) brtsol ba med phyir gang ltar yang/
(31) gnas pa med de mi gnas na/
(32) mi 'gal tsam du gyur pa yin/

rnal 'byor spyod pa'i lugs nges pa'i don ji bzhin bsgom thabs rdzogs so// man ngag rgum[6] chung/ gnyan dpal dbyangs kyis mdzad pa'o//

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[2] mi (*ThCh* f. 283: *nam mkha' rang la ma gnas zhes/*—[3] bsgom (*ThCh* f. 283: *bsgo ba don . . ./*)—[4] skyil—[5] skyil—[6] dgum

CHAPTER THREE

# THE CIG CAR BA TRADITION IN TIBET

In the previous chapter we have made a close study of some Tun-huang documents especially *IOL* 647 and 594 that helped us to establish a criterion for demonstrating how the rDzogs chen literature and its thought began in the late ninth century.

Let us now look at a work which belongs to a relatively later period than the Tun-huang documents, e.g. the *Rig pa'i khu byug*, the *sBas pa'i rgum chung* and the works of gNyan dPal-dbyangs which are extensively quoted in it. This work, after the Tun-huang documents is the most important work that has yet come to light. It is known under various titles, but the common one is *rNal 'byor mig gi bsam gtan* and also quite often known as *sGom gyi gnad gsal ba phye ba bsam gtan mig sgron*.[1] It is devoted to the exposition of the different Buddhist approaches to enlightenment: the doctrines of the Gradualist (Rim gyis pa), of the Simultaneist (Cig car ba),[2] of the Mahāyoga tantras and of rDzogs chen. The work is therefore unique in treating the doctrine of the Cig car ba on equal terms with the doctrine of the Rim gyis pa in Tibetan religious tradition, and it seems to be the first and last Tibetan work to have included all four doctrines in one work in the framework of a basic text and auto-commentary.[3] The way in which its chapters are divided has no precedent nor is its example followed by later Tibetan writers. In consequence, it is the only work which gives a detailed account of the doctrines of the Rim gyis pa[4] chiefly developed by Kamalaśīla, and Cig car ba[5] propounded by the Chinese monk Hva-shang Mahāyāna, both masters who flourished in Tibet in the eighth century A.D. The treatment of these doctrines then paves the way for the exposition of the tantric doctrines particularly that

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[1] *sManrtsis shesrig spendzod*, Vol. 74. Leh 1974.

[2] I adopt the orthography *cig car* (*yugapat*) though *Mahāvyutpatti* gives also *cig char*. In his *Dag yig thon mi'i dgongs rgyan*, mTsho sngon 1957, Tshe-brtan zhabs-drung remarks that the spelling *gcig char* and *cig char* are no good (*gcig char dang cig char du 'bri ba mi legs so/*), but no reason is given. The word *cig char* is variously translated in Western works by sudden, instantaneous, immediate, at one go and simultaneous. Cf. Stein 1971, p. 6 et seq.

[3] It is evident from the work that it is an auto-commentary, but the basic text (*rtsa ba*) and the commentary (*'grel ba*) are not distinguishable except at the end of the work where the epilogue of the *rtsa ba* occurs in verse (pp. 495–99).

[4] *SM* Chapt. 4, pp. 23–118.

[5] *SM* Chapt. 5, pp. 118–186.

of the Mahāyoga[6] which then logically leads to the section devoted to the doctrines of rDzogs chen.[7] To analyse the whole work would be totally beyond the scope of the present study since it is a work encompassing all the principal Buddhist doctrines which were then known in Tibet.

Thanks to the studies of Professors P. Demiéville and G. Tucci, the historical development of the famous Sino-Indian Buddhist controversy in Tibet in the eighth century A.D. is now fairly well known. The controversy flared up between two schismatic factions. One was following the Chinese master Hva-shang Mahāyāna summoned to Tibet by King Khri Srong-lde-btsan from Tun-huang then under Tibetan occupation. The other faction in opposition to the newly arrived Chinese master maintained the Indian Buddhist tradition already established by Śāntarakṣita, the co-founder of the bSam-yas monastery and its first abbot. However, the Chinese master soon began to consolidate his position as the number of his followers gradually increased which finally obliged the Indian faction to invite the famous Indian dialectician Kamalaśīla from Nepal,[8] a personal disciple of Śāntarakṣita.

According to the Tibetan historical tradition, the controversy ended in the defeat of the Chinese faction and Hva-shang Mahāyāna was sent back to Tun-huang and his doctrine was banned in Tibet by a royal decree.[9]

Professor G. Tucci considers that the central point of the controversy is about the recognition, "anagnose", of the "spiritual basis" (*gzhi*). On this same assumption, he also holds the view that not only rDzogs chen tradition, but also the Jo nang pa have developed their doctrines on the basis of the Hva-shang doctrine, namely Buddha-nature.[10] Now it is true that the "spiritual basis" (*gzhi*) is often the ground of debate between the later Tibetan Buddhist schools. However, the idea of Buddha-nature which appears under various terms like the natural luminosity of mind (*sems kyi rang bzhin 'odgsal ba*) corresponds to the theory of *rang bzhin gnas rigs* (*prakṛtisthagotra*) of the gradualist schools.[11] It is known to be parallel to the theory of *tathāgatagarbha* which in turn corresponds to *bodhi-*

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[6] *SM* Chapt. 6, pp. 186–290.

[7] *SM* Chapt. 7, pp. 290–494.

[8] *BZh* p. 56.

[9] *BZh* p. 62. But according to the Chinese accounts the Hva-shang school was authorised to continue its teaching in Tibet, Demiéville 1952, pp. 42, 170. However, D. Ueyama, in an effort to reconcile the contradiction between the Tibetan and the Chinese sources, suggests that the Hva-shang had a debate with Śāntarakṣita (in writing) and won it, but on later occasion he was defeated by Kamalaśīla and then banished to China, Demiéville 1970, pp. 39–41.

[10] Tucci 1973, p. 33.

[11] Ruegg 1969, p. 75 et seq.

*citta* in rDzogs chen. Therefore, the recognition of the theory of this basic principle common to all Buddhist schools cannot constitute the basis of the Sino-Indian Buddhist controversy. It is the method rather than the "spiritual basis" that is the substance of the argument. On the one hand, the Indian faction maintained that in order to develop and to realise the "spiritual basis" one must follow a gradual course (*rim gyis 'jug pa*). On the other, the Chinese faction insisted upon a simultaneous path (*cig car du jug pa*) for the same realisation which according to this tradition is termed "non-imagination" (*rnam par mi rtog pa, avikalpa*).[12] Indeed, it is in these terms (the different approaches often transcribing Chinese words Tsen men for the Gradualist and Ton men for the Simultaneist) that the two schools have been known in Tibetan Buddhist tradition.[13]

While the history of this Buddhist schism in Tibet is well studied, little is known of the doctrine of the Cig car ba tradition itself in Tibet. Yet there is ample evidence that this tradition by no means completely died out in Tibet itself after the expulsion of its founder[14] or even before the persecution of the Buddhist monastic establishment by King Glang Darma (d. 842).[15] We know that at the beginning of the ninth century, Tshig-tsa Nam-mkha'i snying-po and sBug Ye-shes-dbyangs were active and the latter composed certain treatises on the Cig car ba doctrine.[16] The adepts of this tradition who preached the doctrine were called *bsam gtan gyi mkhan po*.[17] The works, translation or otherwise, are classified as *bsam gtan gyi yi ge*.[18] Treatises on the practice of meditation according to

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[12] *SM* p. 54, see also p. 104.

[13] Prof. P. Demiéville, writing on the meaning of the Chinese terms, remarks that Bu-ston did not understand what these Chinese words meant as the latter kept the Tibetan transcription of the Chinese words untranslated in his narration of the Sino-Indian controversy (*Le Concile de Lhasa*, p. 10, n. 1). It is quite probable that Bu-ston did not read Chinese as much as Sanskrit, but does explain the Chinese words in the same work, *DS* p. 890: *ston mun dang tsen mun ni rgya'i skad de gcig car ba dang rim gyis pa zhes bya'o/* (E. Obermiller, Part II, p. 196). Prof. Demiéville further states that the Chinese master Hva-shang Mahāyāna was neither a gradualist nor a "Subitiste" and that if the controversy is surrounded by these questions, it is because the Tibetans sensed the quarrel between the Chinese Northern school of Ch'an (gradualist) and the Southern school ("Subitiste"), "Recents travaux sur Touen-houang", 1970, p. 85–5. If that is the case, certain Tun-huang documents on Dhyāna, for example *PT* 117 (*mkhan po ma ha yan gyi/ bsam gtan chig car 'jug pa'i sgo*) and *PT* 812 remain to be explained since they explicitly show that Hva-shang Mahāyāna advocates the "Subitiste" doctrine.

[14] G. Tucci also is of this opinion (1973, p. 34).

[15] According to a Tun-huang document, Buddhism, specially tantrism, was a flourishing religion in Tibet during the period in question (Karmay 1981, pp. 207–211).

[16] *PT* 996 (Lalou 1939, pp. 514–15, 520–21; Imaeda 1975, pp. 136, 37; Karmay 1975, pp. 153–54).

[17] *SM* p. 152. The title is a rendering of the Chinese word *Ch'an shih, MBT* II, p. 67.

[18] However, this phrase appears as a general heading for all types of works on meditation in *TD* (p. 150–1–3). But in his *DS*, Bu-ston clearly distinguishes the *sgom rim* type works from *bsam gtan gyi yi ge: sgom rim dang bsam gtan gyi yi ge sna tshogs kyi skor la/* (p. 916).

this tradition are known as *sgom lung*[19] in contrast to *sgom rim* (*bhāvanakrama*),[20] treatises on the method of the Rim gyis pa tradition. The temple bSam-gtan-gling in bSam-yas is said to have been a residence of Hva-shang Mahāyāna and his disciples.[21] However, the tradition does not seem to have been able to subsist after the persecution of Glang Dar-ma any more than the Rim gyis pa tradition itself. The latter though officially adopted in the eighth century A.D. had gradually lost its prominence before the eleventh century. Its synthesis of Yogacārā and Madhyamaka doctrines finally gave way to the advent of the purist Mādhyamika, the Prasaṅgika with the appearance in Tibet of the translation of the *Madhyamakavātara* of Candrakīrti in the eleventh century A.D. Meanwhile, there is strong evidence that the tantric tradition entirely escaped the persecution of Glang Dar-ma, especially the Mahāyoga tantras which continued to flourish right up to the early eleventh century A.D.[22] The rDzogs chen doctrine existed in the eighth century at least in its embryonic form, and so does not seem to have been able to establish itself on the same scale as other schools like the Rim gyis pa and Cig car ba. This is probably due to the unstable circumstances of its founder, Vairocana.[23] However that may be, evidence can be found that it subsisted and developed along the line of the Mahāyoga tantric tradition after the persecution and before the re-establishment of the Buddhist monastic system in the eleventh century A.D. The infancy of rDzogs chen and the disappearance of the Cig car ba as a living tradition after the persecution seem to have misled certain segments of the Tibetan Buddhist orthodoxy, from the king of mNga'-ris, lHa Bla-ma Ye-shes-'od, to the Sa skya pa and the dGe lugs pa to assume that rDzogs chen is a disguised form of the Cig car ba,[24] and consequently for some Westerners to view the rDzogs chen in much the same light.[25] Now it is true that there exist certain attitudes and traits common to both the Cig car ba and the rDzogs chen traditions and it is probably the existence of these parallels which brought about the criticism against rDzogs chen by the later Tibetan Buddhist schools.

Professor Tucci states: "L'étroite relation existant entre la s rDsogs c'en et les doctrines de l'école de Hva śaṅ est corroborée par un

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[19] *SM* pp. 143–52; Cf. *ThCh* ff. 233, 281. But the word also has the sense of "instruction on meditation": *pho nya bas sgom lung mnos*—"the messenger asked for instructions on meditation" (*BZh* pp. 6, 20). Cf. also *KhG* JA, f. 74b3, 76b3.

[20] E.g. the three *sgom rim* of Kamalaśīla, *TD* p. 150–1–3; *GCh*, Vol. I, p. 95.

[21] *BZh* pp. 40, 56; *KhG* Ja, ff. 115b7–16a1.

[22] See n. 15.

[23] Cf. pp. 18–37.

[24] E.g. *DR*, p. 309–2–6; *BNy* p. 292.

[25] Tucci 1973, p. 35.

important fragment conservé dans le bKa' t'an sde lna".[26] This statement is based on a number of suppositions which however cannot be proved. The existence of an account of the Cig car ba tradition in Tibet in *bKa' thang sde lnga* which refers to Bodhidharma, considered to be the founder of the Ch'an school, is taken as a proof of rDzogs chen's close relation to the Cig car ba tradition. In this case, Professor Tucci has not taken into account the existence of the most important documents on rDzogs chen, for example *IOL* 597 and 647[27] and also the chapter on the Cig car ba tradition in Tibet given in *SM*.[28] However, it must be mentioned that the publication of *SM* appeared in 1974 a year after the appearance of *Les religions du Tibet*.

It is the *Blon po bka' thang*, the fifth section of the *bKa' thang sde lnga* which contains a relatively detailed account of the Cig car ba tradition in Tibet.[29] It gives an appearance of antiquity not only because of the subject but also because of the obscurity of its language. Professor Tucci has meticulously edited the Tibetan text and given an English rendering.[30] He wondered what kind of sources, *BK* had used.[31] It would therefore be desirable to make a detailed analysis of the content of *BK* and to assess its reliability in the light of the recent new publications, such as *SM*, but such an enterprise would exceed the limits of the present research. Nevertheless, an attempt will be made to show to what extent *BK* was dependent on *SM* by extracting two important and representative passages and comparing them to those of *SM*. It is now well known that other sections of the *bKa' thang sde lnga*, the *bTsun mo bka' thang*, for example, have borrowings from other works without indication of their sources.[32] *BK* is no less guilty in this respect. In fact, it is a pell-mell summary of chapter four of *SM*.[33] Other sources apart from *SM* are also used since certain short

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[26] See *ibid.*, p. 35.
[27] See pp. 74–76; 56–59.
[28] *SM* pp. 118–86.
[29] Chaps. 12–13. *bKa' thang sde lnga* is said to have been "rediscovered" by O-rgyan gling-pa (1239–1367). For a detailed study of its date of "rediscovery", see Blondeau 1971, pp. 29, 41–42.
[30] *MBT* II, pp. 69–102.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 65.
[32] Blondeau 1971, pp. 33–48.
[33] Here is a sketch of the passages which roughly correspond to each other:

| *MBT* | *SM* |
|---|---|
| p. 68, *ll.* 4–6 | p. 15, *ll.* 1–3. |
| p. 68, *ll.* 3—p. 69, *l.* 1 | p. 23, *ll.* 5—p. 24, *ll.* 1–5 |
| p. 69, *ll.* 1–23 | p. 15, *ll.* 2–6—p. 16, *l.* 5 |
| p. 69, *ll.* 23–29 | p. 33, *ll.* 3–5 |
| p. 70, *ll.* 16–20 | p. 25, *ll.* 1–3 |
| p. 70, *ll.* 20—p. 71, *l.* 14 | p. 55, *l.* 5—p. 59, *l.* 1 |

passages cannot be traced back to *SM*.[34] The author of *BK* has often treated his source rather roughly in his method of summarisation. While some passages are given in their entirety[35] others are abridged in such a way that either the original sense of the passage is totally misinterpreted[36] or rendered simply incomprehensible.[37] Only by recourse to the original do some of the passages make sense. This unsatisfactory state of affairs is further aggravated by the adaptation of writing the work in metre. Passages have been picked up at random and regardless, it seems, of whether it is the actual text of *SM* or a passage quoted from a source by the author of *SM*.[38] The author of *BK* therefore had no access to documents comparable to those of Tun-huang as has been assumed, but has "rewritten" the account of the Cig car ba tradition using *SM* and possibly another similar work.

Here are two passages extracted from *BK* along with their parallels in *SM* in order to illustrate to what extent the account given in *BK* is a misconstruction.

> "*bo dhi dhar mo tta rai brgyud 'dzin ni/ tha ma hva shang ma ha ya nai gzhung/ cig car 'jug pa yongs su rdzogs pa yis/ dpe don mang po mdo sde gzhung la thug/ de dag 'dod gzhung yi ge yod pa dang/ dhar mo tta rai rgya lung chen mo rnams/ ci yang byar med man ngag snyan khung brgyud/ rgya gar slob dpon ka ma si la yis/ drang po don gyi mdo sde yongs ma rdzogs/ rim pa slob la sogs pa the tshom gcod/ sa tsha gdab dang nye 'don bya ba dang/ stong zam 'dzugs dang lam 'phreng sel ba dang/ mchod rten rtsig dang gtsug lag khang mang bzhengs/ rab tu byung ba'i sde pa chen po bca'/ mdo sde rgya chen klog 'don bya ba dang/ chos 'khor chen po bshad nyan bya ba dang/* (20b) *dug bsngal can gyi grogs rnams bya ba dang/ nye ring med pas nad pa gso ba dang/ sbyin rgya chen po rlab chen ci cher 'bad/ hva shang ma ha spyod thabs bcu gnyis spyod/ theg pa chen po gsang sngags pa la ni/ dbang gi rim pa mang po nod pa dang/ sgrub pa'i dkyil 'khor mang po zhal dbye dang/ sman rag gtor tshogs sreg mnan bya ba dang/ sgom*

| | |
|---|---|
| p. 71, *ll.* 14–27 | p. 61, *ll.* 2—p. 63, *l.* 1 |
| p. 71, *ll.* 27—p. 72, *l.* 1 | p. 65, *ll.* 1–4 |
| p. 72, *ll.* 1–5 | p. 117, *ll.* 6—p. 118, *ll.* 2 |
| p. 72, *ll.* 7–16 | p. 118, *ll.* 4—p. 119, *ll.* 4 |
| p. 73, *ll.* 4–10 | p. 185, *ll.* 4—p. 186, *l.* 1 |
| p. 73, *ll.* 10—p. 77, *ll.* 6 | p. 119, *ll.* 4—p. 132, *ll.* 6 |
| p. 77, *ll.* 6–11 | p. 136, *ll.* 6—p. 137, *ll.* 2 |
| p. 77, *ll.* 11—p. 80, *ll.* 13 | p. 144, *ll.* 2—p. 176, *ll.* 6 |
| p. 80, *ll.* 13–16 | p. 179, *ll.* 6—p. 180, *l.* 1 |
| p. 80, *ll.* 16–19 | p. 180, *ll.* 6—p. 181, *ll.* 2 |

[34] E.g. *MBT* II, p. 69, *ll.* 30—p. 70, *ll.* 16; p. 72, *ll.* 14—p. 73, *l.* 1.

[35] E.g. *MBT* II, p. 76, *ll.* 26—p. 77, *ll.* 6; *SM* p. 132.

[36] E.g. pp. 91–92.

[37] E.g. pp. 96–97.

[38] E.g. *MBT* II, p. 72, *ll.* 13–16. These lines are quoted from a certain work entitled *Sems lon* in *SM* (p. 119). On the word *lon*, Cf. Karmay 1975, p. 153; Wu Chiyu, "Wolun zhanshi chujía anxin shigongde fanben shishi", *The Chu Hai Journal*, No. 11 (October 1980, Hong Kong), p. 81.

*grva 'dzugs pa sogs la 'bad pa'o/ rab byung sde pa mchod gnas mi bkur ro/ tshul 'chos chos lugs rdzong ngam khud cing blta/ gsang sngags pa yi spyod thabs bcu gnyis so.*"[39]

"The last successor of Bodhidharmottāra was Hva shang Mahāyāna: the main substance of his teaching (gzhung) (is that) having perfected the (method) of instantaneous entrance (cig car 'jug), one comes in contact with the many exemplary meanings, the kernel of the sūtras; that kernel aiming at those (meanings) extant in writings and the extensive Chinese instructions of Dharmottāra, represent the authorative tradition (snyan khung) of the secret instructions, upadeśa (man ngag) with no recourse to any activity whatsoever. The Indian ācārya Kama(la)śila did not fully realise (the meaning) of the sūtras the sense of which is to be determined (i.e. relative) (drang don, neya): he solved the doubts (concerning) the learning of (gradual) method etc.; he made tsha tsha and established the practice of the muttering of formulae(nye 'don); he laid out bridges to the void and eliminated the narrow paths, erected many mchod rten and dedicated many chapels and established (bca') a great community of ordained monks; (he determined) the rituals for reading and reciting the great sūtras; (he settled) the rituals concerning the explanation and the hearing (of the texts) during the religious assemblies (chos 'khor) (20b) and the method (intended to) help those who are in grief, the treatment of the diseased whether near or remote; for great liberality and great blessings, for whatever great he strove. Hva shang Māhāyana practised the twelve methods of the practice: in the secret mantras of the great vehicle, many methods of initiation he received, he opened many maṇḍalas of the mystic realisation; the method of tasting medicines, of accumulating offerings, of submitting fire, building of colleges of meditation, etc. for all this he greatly strove. To pay no homage to the ordained monks, to communities and places of worship (mchod gnas), to view (things) rejecting any traditional rule (tshul 'chos) or tenet, such are the twelve methods of the practice of the secret mantras."[40]

Let us now look at the parallel passage in *SM*:

*de la rgyu'i theg pa bcom ldan 'das sku mya ngan las 'da' kar 'od srung la gdams ngag phog/ de nas dar mo dha ra la sogs pa nas/ rgya nag por bdun rgyud tha ma ha shang ma ha ya na la thug/ de nas bod yul du btsan po dang dge slong rnams la yod pa ni nub/ de dag gi 'dod gzhung gi yi ge dag yod pa de dag dang/ ka ma la shi las rim par bslab pa la sogs pa dag the tshom chod par byes te/ phyis slob dpon la mi snyeg par bya ba dang/ sngags nang pa la thabs 'dod chags chen po'i ting nge 'dzin gyi man ngag dang/ gdams ngag thig le la sogs te/ steng 'og gi sgo'i man ngag dang/ lhag pa'i rnal 'byor la ni/ ci la yang bya ba med pa'i man ngag snyan khung brgyud pa thob par bya ba stel zhib tu 'og nas kyang ston/ mdor bzhag thabs dang/ sems bcos thabs dang/ spyod lam bya thabs la sogs pa'i the tshom bcad pa dang/ sa tstsha gdab pa dang/ nye 'don dang/ stong zam dang/ lam 'phrang bsal ba dang/ mchod rten dang gtsug lag khang bya ba dang/ rab tu byung ba'i sde ba chen po bca' ba dang/ mdo sde rgya chen po bklag pa dang/ chos kyi 'khor lo chen po bya ba dang/ sdug bsngal can gyi grogs bya ba dang/ nye ring med pa'i nad bag gso ba dang/ sbyin pa rgya chen po la sogs pa rlabs ci cher*

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[39] *MBT* II, p. 69, *ll.* 1–23.

[40] *Ibid.*, pp. 82–83. The annotations of this translation have not been quoted here.

*'bad do/ theg pa chen po sngags la ni khyad par du yang/ dbang gi rim pa mang po nod pa dang/ sgrub pa'i dkyil 'khor mang du zhal phye ba dang/ sbyin sreg rgya chen po bya ba dang/ rab tu byung ba'i sde pa yang mchod gnas su bkur ba dang/ snyin rje khud pa'i zhing du bya ba dang/ sgom grva gzug pa la sogs pa la 'bad par bya'o/*

"Now the precepts of the 'vehicle of cause' were imparted to 'Od-srung (Kāśyapa) by the Bhagavān just before he passed away into Nirvāṇa.[41] The lineage of (that teaching) passed from Dharmottara, etc. reaching Hva-shang Mahāyāna, the last of the seven successions in China.[42] Then

[41] The Ch'an school holds Kāśyapa as its first patriarch, Its teaching is then believed to have been passed through 28 or 29 Indian patriarchs including Bodhidharma, Cf. *PT* 699; Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, I, pp. 155–56; 215–19. However, most of the names of this Indian lineage were fabricated in China in order to prove the authenticity of the Ch'an teaching in the face of the criticism of heresy brought against it by the orthodox Buddhists, P. Demiéville, *L'Annuaire du Collège de France*, LVII (1957), pp. 349–52; also Cf. note 42.

[42] Hva-shang Mahāyāna is considered to be the last of 7 successive patriarchs of the Ch'an school in China (*bdun rgyud tha ma*) and Bodhidharma, the first of the 7 (*bdun rgyud dang po*), *PT* 116 (A. Macdonald, Y. Imaeda 1978, Pl. 109/164) and *PT* 821. A text entitled *mKhan po bdun rgyud kyi mdo* is also mentioned in *PT* 813 (A. Macdonald, Y. Imaeda 1978, Pl. 208/12b).

The rDzogs chen master A-ro Ye-shes 'byung-gnas (c. the first half of the 11th century A.D.) is considered by the rNying ma pa to have possessed precepts of rDzogs chen that were transmitted through 7 generations of Indian teachers (*rDzogs chen rgya gar bdun brgyud*) as well as precepts transmitted through 7 Chinese teachers in succession (*rgya'i hva shang bdun brgyud*), *BA* p. 167; *ShK* Pt. OM, p. 507. According to Sog-zlog-pa (*NgD* p. 493) the teaching that was transmitted through the lineage of the Chinese teachers reaching finally A-ro Ye-shes 'byung-gnas is not Ch'an, but rDzogs chen. However, he does not give the names of the teachers. On the other hand, Ka-thog Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu states that the question of the 7 "emanations" (*sprul ba bdun brgyud*) which appears in *Lo paṇ bka' thang* (not *Lo-paṇ bka' thang*, but *BK*, f. 19a4: *rgya nag sprul bdun brgyud pa*) are in his opinion the Ch'an teachers counting from Hui k'e down to Hva-shang Mahāyāna, but he too does not name all the 7 teachers (*rGya nag hva shang gi byung tshul grub mtha'i phyogs snga bcas sa bon tsam smos pa yid kyi dri ma dag byed dge ba'i chu rgyun, Collected Works*, Delhi 1976, Vol. V, No. 158, p. 432.

While the list of the 7 teachers of the Indian lineage of rDzogs chen is not readily available (Cf. p. 20, n. 10), the 7 patriarchs of the Ch'an schools can more or less be given. In fact, the Ch'an school in China normally has only 6 patriarchs.

1. Bodhidharma
2. Hui-k'e (c. 487–593)
3. Seng-ts'an (d. around 606)
4. Tao-hsin (580–651)
5. Hung-jen (601–674)

The 6th patriarch is Hui-neng (638–713) according to the Southern branch of the school and Shen-hsiu (600–706) according to the Northern branch, both were disciples of Hung-jen. After this quarrel, the main line was broken and there was no question of having any more patriarchs, and the school itself splits up into five more branches. Cf. P. Demiéville, *L'Annuaire du Collège de France*, LVI (1956), p. 289, LVII, (1957), p. 350. It seems therefore that only the Cig car ba tradition in Tibet considers Hva-shang Mahāyāna as the 7th Patriarch and not the Ch'an school itself in China. In his *dGe ba'i bshes gnyen mar yul pa'i dris lan legs par bshad pa'i gzhi* (*Collected Works*, Darjeeling 1973, Vol. Zha, Da, f. 583) Pad-ma dkar-po (1527–1592) gives another version of the lineage, which he obtained from the "last (part) of the history of *sgom rim*" (*sgom rim gyi lo rgyus rting ma*). According to this,

in Tibet where a king[43] and monks possessed the lineage of that teaching it came to be destroyed.[44] (However) one can learn the system of that teaching through the books which exist and (also) learn the gradualist teachings taught by Kamalaśīla. So, now one is obliged to learn them without teachers. As for the inner tantric teachings,[45] one must obtain the precepts of the "door above" and the "door below",[46] such as the concentration of the great sexual method and the precepts of the "drop", etc. As for the supreme yoga,[47] one must obtain the precepts orally transmitted which embody the teaching of "non-activity".[48] These topics will be treated in detail below.[49] One must learn the methods such as the way of sitting, the way of correcting the mind, the way of carrying on everyday life, etc. One

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the Cig car ba teaching was passed from 'Od-srung (Kāśyapa) through 10 Indian masters and then 10 Chinese masters before reaching Hva-shang Mahāyāna who was the 21st. So the number of teachers of the lineage of Dhyāna doctrine vary from one version to another in Tibet as well as in China, Cf. note 41).

[43] The Chinese Tun-huang document translated by Demiéville speaks of a Tibetan queen who became a devotee of the Cig car ba teaching (1952, p. 25, Cf. also Richardson 1977, p. 224), but no mention is made of a king. However, the same document states that the king (i.e. Khri Srong-lde-btsan) questioned the Hva-shang on several occasions concerning the Ch'an doctrine (Demiéville 1952, pp. 154–55; *MBT* II, p. 33). D. Ueyama is of the opinion that it was Khri Srong-lde-btsan who had sent the "22 questions" concerning the Ch'an teaching to a Chinese monk, T'an-k'oung in Tun-huang when the Sino-Indian Buddhist controversy was in full swing in Tibet. P. Demiéville agrees with D. Ueyama, "Recents travaux sur Touen-houang", 1970, pp. 33–35. A work entitled *Theg pa chen po'i bsam gtan gyi man ngag* is mentioned in *TD* under the heading of *bTsan po khri srong lde btsan gyis mdzad pa'i gtsug lag*—"The texts that were written by the bTsan-po Khri Srong-lde-btsan". It is fairly certain that this king was very careful in making a choice between Indian and Chinese Buddhism and so it is possible that he had a fair amount of knowledge of Buddhism. Certain authors have therefore taken the above heading in its literal sense (*MBT* II, p. 122; Macdonald 1971, pp. 307–309). However, other Tibetologists are of the opinion that the heading should be understood as the "works that were written under the order of bTsan-po . . ." (Lalou 1953, p. 318). The text *bKa' yang dag pa'i tshad ma* (Lalou 1953, p. 356) is, in the opinion of R.A. Stein, too technical for a king to be able to write, but may contain certain "reflections" of the king (1980, p. 330; *L'Annuaire du Collège de France*, 1978–9, p. 551).

[44] At this point a note reads: *glang dar ma'i ring la btsun pa ye shes dbang po bar chad du gyur bas mtshan nyid kyi slob dpon brgyud pa nub/*—"During the time of Glang Dar-ma, the monk Ye-shes dbang-po met an obstacle (i.e. he died) so the spiritual lineage of the teachers of philosophy was cut off". Cf. p. 171. Whether this note (*mchan*) and others in *SM* form an integral part of *SM*, i.e. if they are of the author's own or later insertion, is at present a matter of conjecture. When names like Glang Dar-ma are used, one really wonders. This nick-name is not attested in any of the Tun-huang documents.

[45] The expression *sngags nang pa* has the same sense as that of *rnal 'byor nang pa*, i.e. Mahāyoga tantras, *SM* (p. 24): *sngags nang pa rnal 'byor chen po/* Two kinds of *rnal 'byor*, inner and outer are given in the classification of the Nine Vehicles, see, pp. 172–74.

[46] A more detailed account of this is given in chapter 6 of *SM* (pp. 220–223).

[47] The expression *lhag pa'i rnal 'byor* is a translation of the term, *atiyoga*, also rendered by *shin tu rnal 'byor*. Here there is a note: *'bro lha bu rin chen nas bka' ma chad par bzhugs*—"(The line of this teaching) is continuous from lHa-bu-rin-chen of 'Bro", Cf. p. 210.

[48] On this see p. 115.

[49] This is a reference to chapters from 4 to 7 of *SM* where the traditions of Rim gyis pa, Cig car ba, Mahāyoga and rDzogs chen are treated in detail.

> must work on producing tsa tsatsha, saving the lives of small fishes,[50] building bridges, removing the obstacles which prevent one from crossing gorge,[51] building stūpas and temples, establishing large communities of monks, reciting great sūtras, giving discourses on Dharma, helping those who are in misery, treating those who are ill impartially and giving alms in large quantity. In the case of the tantric teachings, one must especially work on obtaining many grades of *abhiṣeka*,[52] in opening up many *maṇḍala* of rituals for realisation, performing the rite of *homa* with great frequency, paying respects to the monastic communities,[53] taking upon one's self the care of those who are the object of compassion and establishing meditation centres, etc."[54]

A close comparison of these two passages shows how far the author of *BK* misinterpreted his source. The phrases *cig car 'jug payongs su rdzogs pa* and *drang ba don gyi mdo sde yongs su ma rdzogs pa* are taken by the author of *BK* from another passage of *SM*[55] and inserted into the passage quoted above. The author of *SM* considers that the simultaneist system originates in the sūtras which are *nges don gyi mdo* (*nītārthasūtra*) whilst tracing the gradualist system to *drang don gyi mdo* (*neyārthasūtra*). It is not a question of Hva-shang Mahāyāna "having perfected the (method) of instantaneous entrance" or Kamalaśīla not having "fully realised the meaning of the sūtras".[56]

The *rGya lung chen mo* of Dharmottara which is translated as the "extensive Chinese instructions" is in fact the title of a text. Although it is not mentioned among the *mthun pa'i dharma*, it is often quoted in *SM*.[57] A similar work by the same author is mentioned in *TD*. This is said to have been translated into Tibetan from Chinese and has 900 ślokas.[58] What perhaps represents the most flagrant insertion on the part of the author of *BK* is the line *hva shang ma ha spyod thabs bcu gnyis spyod/*. As can

[50] The term *nye'u* has two senses: "small fish" and "criminal" (Tshe-brtan zhabs-drung, *Thon mi'i dgongs rgyan*, mTshon sngon 1957). The word *nye 'don* is an abridged form of *nye'u 'don pa*, "to save a criminal form being punished or to save the lives of small fishes from a fisherman on account of the great number". It has no connotation of "muttering of formulae".

[51] In *MBT* II (p. 82, n. 4) *'phrang* is taken to mean *bar do* (*antarābhava*).

[52] There are usually four grades: *phyi dbang, bum pa'i dbang, gsang ba shes rab dbang* and *yang gsang dbang*.

[53] In *BK* this is in the negative: "not to pay respects", see p. 92.

[54] *SM* pp. 15–16.

[55] Pp. 23–25. The phrase *gcig car 'jug pa yongs su rdzogs pa* should rather be *nges pa'i don gyi mdo sde yongs su rdzogs pa* in contrast to *drang ba'i don gyi mdo sde yongs su ma rdzogs pa*.

[56] *yongs su rdzogs pa* here evidently stands for "complete", "full", so *yongs su rdzogs pa'i mdo sde* means sūtras that teach the truth explicitly or fully, i.e. *nitārtha-sūtra, yongs su ma rdzogs pa'i mdo sde, neyārtha-sūtra*, the sūtras that do not teach the truth openly.

[57] Pp. 130, 177, but also *Maha yan gyi bsam gtan rgya lung chen po* (p. 173).

[58] This text is listed among the works that were no longer extant in Bu-ston's time (*DS* p. 963).

be seen in the parallel passage of *SM* quoted above, this line does not exist there. *SM* simply gives a number of things to be practised by those who follow the gradualist teaching, such as *tsa tstsha*, but nevertheless does not state what these are called.[59] After this, it enumerates seven different categories to be engaged in by those who practise the inner tantras, i.e. Mahāyoga tantras. It is therefore quite misleading to say the least, if we imagine that the two masters were engaged in such activities as the passage of *BK* (and consequently its translation by Professor Tucci) assert. The desire of the author of *BK* to make the Hva-shang out to be tantrist might explain why a certain circle of the rNying ma pa school defends the Chinese simultaneist teaching.[60] He eulogises the Cig car ba tradition in the following words: "the gradualist is like a small fish in a puddle. The simultaneist is like a fish in a river."[61] Again "the simultaneist is like a lion set on its way. It meets no hinderance whether there is a cliff or a gorge. The gradualist is like a fox setting out on its way. It cannot cross over the cliffs and gorges. It returns!"[62] All these lines are pure insertions into the résumé of the passages of *SM* by the author of *BK*. The author of *SM*, on the other hand, treats the Cig car ba doctrine as valid Buddhist teaching, even superior to the Gradualist doctrine,[63] but no special eulogy is devoted to it. However, a eulogy similar to that in *BK* is found in the *dGongs 'dus*, but here it seems to refer to simultaneist thought rather than the Ch'an doctrine.[64] This misinterpretation of the author of *BK* has led Professor Tucci to translate the following passage as:

> "*mthun pai mchod rten thos bsam sgom gsum bsgom/ ka ma si la rim gyis pa yang bsten/ ha shang ma ha ya nai bsam gtan dang/ yo ga nang pai zab moi chos rnams dang/ lhag pai rnal 'byor rlung rub bzhi sbugs dang/ k'o na nyid kyi zab moi rgyud drug dang/ sems 'preng nyi shu sems smad bco brgyad bsten/* . . ."[65]

> "Kamalaśīla, the propounder of the progressive method, addicted himself to meditation on the common supports of worship, on these three: learning,

[59] Ten kinds of religious practices (*chos spyod bcu*) are mentioned in *BZh* (pp. 60, 62) and it is clearly stated that it is the Rim gyis pa who practises them. A similar list is also found in a Bonpo text, not 12 but 13 and they are called *dge bsnyen gyi bon spyod bcu gsum*, "the 13 practices of Bon of the way of *dGe bsnyen* (*BS* p. 259). Only 5 are given in *gZi brjid* (Snellgrove 1967, p. 130, *l.* 31).

[60] e.g. 'Jigs-med gling pa, *Kun mkhyen zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thigs pa*, f. 6a.

[61] *MBT* II (p. 72, *ll.* 8): *rim gyis pa ni ko mo'i nya chung 'dra/ cig car ba ni gtsang chu'i nya dang 'dra/* The word *ko mo* means "pool", "puddle", not "raft" as translated in (*MBT* II, p. 89). Also the word *gtsang chu* does not mean "clear water" (*MBT* II, p. 89). It stands for *gtsangs po'i chu*, i.e. "the water of a river", *gtsang po* generally has the sense of "river" apart from being the Tibetan name for Brahmaputra.

[62] *MBT* II (p. 72, *ll.* 17–20): *cig car ba ni seng ge lam zhugs 'dra/ gad med g.yang med kun la thogs med do/ rim gyis pa ni va mo lam zhugs 'dra/ gad g.yang mi thar ba la log skor byed/*

[63] *SM* p. 185.

[64] *dGongs 'dus*, p. 199–1–1.

[65] *MBT* II, pp. 69, *ll.* 24–30.

reflection, concentration. Hva śaṅ Mahāyāna addicted himself to dhyāna (bsam gtan), the deep dharmas of inner yoga, the superior yoga, the breathing up of the four winds (prāṅa) the six deep tantras concerned with the reality, the twenty difficulties of mind, the eighteen states of no-mind."[66]

The parallel passage of this in *SM* is as follows:

*mthun pa'i dar ma ni/ ka ma la shi la dang/ ma hā yan gyi bsam gtan dang/ rnal 'byor nang pa'i zab pa'i phyogs mams dang/ lhag pa'i rnal 'byor pa'i klong drug dang/ bzhi phrugs dang/ de kho na nyid kyi rgyud drug dang/ sems phran nyi shu'am bco brgyad la sogs pa bsten no/*[67]

"As for the harmonious books, there are those of Kamalaśīla, and those on Dhyāna by Mahāyāna; those profound ones belonging to the category of the inner tantric teachings;[68] the *Klong drug*,[69] the *bZhi phrugs*,[70] the *De kho na nyid kyi rgyud drug*,[71] and the 18 or 20 *Sems phran*,[72] etc. belonging to the category of the supreme yoga are (good) to have."

This list of texts is given in *SM* in a context where four different categories are considered which it is an advantage for a man of religion to have (*mthun pa bsten pa bzhi*):

1. To have an experienced companion (*nyams dang ldan pa'i grogs*) who in case of difficulty in finding a qualified teacher can act as a teacher;
2. To have a feminine partner qualified both physically and spiritually (*mtshan dang ldan pa'i phyag rgya*) in case the adept is a follower of the Mahāyoga tantras;
3. To have books that are harmonious with one's disposition (*bsam pa dang mthun pa'i dharma*).[73] It is here that the above books are given.
4. To have a pleasant servant (*yid du 'ong ba'i g.yog*).

Therefore, in both *BK* and *SM*, it is not at all a question of the Hva shang having "addicted" himself to the "inner yoga" or "superior yoga".[74]

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[66] *Ibid.*, p. 83.
[67] *SM* p. 33.
[68] Cf. p. 155.
[69] This is probably identical to the *Kun tu bzang po klong drug pa'i rgyud* (Kaneko No. 158, ff. 609–69), but as it is not quoted in *SM*, there is no means of verifying it. Klong-chen rab-'byams uses it as one of the fundamental sources in his works, e.g. *Theg mchog mdzod*, ff. 190a5, 300a3 et passim; *Tshig don mdzod* ff. 4b2, 5b2, 6b3 et passim.
[70] A title of a text which remains unidentified. There is a note, but our text is faulty and does not allow interpretation. Elsewhere, the *bzhi phrugs* occurs (*gNas lugs mdzod*, f. 72a): *lta sgom spyod 'bras bzhi phrugs cig lhun grub tu 'byung ste/*—"View, contemplation, conduct and the result, the four will come naturally and simultaneously.
[71] Another title of possibly a group of texts, which also remains unidentified.
[72] On these see, p. 23.
[73] *dar ma, dharma* here has the sense of actual book. It is in this sense that the phrase *gnam babs kyi dharma*—"the holy books that descended from heaven" is to be understood. Cf. Richardson 1977, pp. 219–20.
[74] See above on this page.

As a proof for rDzogs chen's dependence on the teaching of the Hvashang, Professor Tucci further states: "Grace aussi à l'un des premiers moines tibétains ordonnés (sad mi), Nam-mk'a sniṅ po de gNubs, connu comme maître de Ch'an et auquel se rapportent divers colophons contenus dans le recueil rNyiṅ ma rgyud 'bum, les rNiṅ ma pa semblent prolonger certains aspects de la doctrine Ch'an dans leur dogmatique."[75]

It is doubtful that the identification of bDud-'dul snying-po mentioned in *BK* to Tshig-tsa Nam-mkha'i snying-po of *PT* 996 made by Professor Tucci is acceptable.[76] It is true that both names occur within the same tradition, but the short life-story of Tshig-tsa Nam-mkha'i snying-po does not contain any indication which would permit such an identification. It is still less probable that this master of the Cig car ba tradition is identical with gNubs Nam-mkha'i snying-po for the simple fact that both have distinctively different family names: Tshig-tsa and gNubs.[77]

We have textual evidence that Tshig-tsa Nam-mkha'i snying-po was ordained as a monk during the reign of Khri Srong-lde-btsan and became an adept of the Cig car ba doctrine. His teacher was Man Hva-shang who was in Tsong-kha. Before the teacher left for China, the Governor of Tsong-kha, bDe-blon Zhang Khri-gsum-rje[78] asked him if there was anyone who was capable of teaching Buddhism in his place, he told the Governor that his disciple Tshig-tsa Nam-mkha'i snying-po was able to do it and those who wished to practise Buddhism could ask him for guidance.

The name gNubs Nam-mkha'i snying-po is attested in one of the Tunhuang documents and he is described as one who had no remains when he died (*pung po lhag ma med pa*).[80] He is also mentioned in the chapter on Mahāyoga tantras in *SM* as Jo-bo Nam-mkha'i snying-po and a note identifies him as gNubs. It is significant that he is mentioned in the section on Mahāyoga tantric doctrines. As a sign of his accomplishment of the tantric practice, *ḍākinī* came to lead him away when he died.[81] He is

[75] 1973, pp. 35–36.
[76] *MBT* II, p. 67.
[77] *SM* clearly distinguishes the two masters by mentioning the two different family names (pp. 180, 278).
[78] The second personage in the list of Tibetan dignitaries who signed the Sino-Tibetan peace treaty in 821–22, A.D., Richardson 1952, p. 74 (Transl. p. 76); Demiéville 1952, pp. 280–91.
[79] *PT* 996 (Lalou 1939, pp. 511–12, Tibetan text, f. 1b7, 2a3).
[80] *PT* 699.
[81] P. 278: *jo bo nam mkha'i snying po* (*mchan*: *gnubs*) *mkha' 'gro mas bsu nas gshegs/* For a short account of this master, see *TTGL*, pp. 62–65; A "biography" of *gter ma* origin is mentioned in *Tibetan Catalogue* compiled by G. Smith, University of Washington (Seattle) 1969, p. 209, No. 9.

therefore considered to be primarily a tantric master by the author of *SM*. It is true that his name appears as the name of a translator in several colophons in the collection of *rNying ma rgyud 'bum*, but no traces can be found of the Ch'an doctrine in the tantras under question.[82]

It is now of paramount importance to have a close look at the question of rDzogs chen's relation to the Cig car ba tradition using more reliable and older sources than *BK*. However, there are only a few works older than *BK* and as seen *SM* is perhaps the most important one after the Tun-huang documents. It provides a certain amount of data for examining the question. Our investigation will be within the limits of the presentation made by the author of *SM* as he understood the tradition in the tenth century A.D. in which he lived. No work comparable to *SM* in scope or antiquity is in fact available at present, but on the other hand, it must be used with circumspection since no other copies of this work, manuscript or otherwise, exist to make any comparisons. Nonetheless, I propose here to study briefly the chapter on the doctrine of the Cig car ba and compare it with some of the related Tun-huang documents which may help us to gain an idea of the doctrinal relationship between the doctrines of the Cig car ba and those of rDzogs chen, and finally give a brief analysis of the seventh chapter which is entirely devoted to the doctrine of rDzogs chen.

However, before we embark on the analysis of the relevant chapters of the work, we might well have a few words about the author of *SM*, gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, and thereby try to work out the date of the work. gNubs is an old name of a clan attested in Tun-huang documents. This clan provided several ministers of the early kings.[83] The author styles himself gNubs-ban, the Vandya of gNubs.[84] It is quite probable that this author is identical with the personage of the same name in the later rNying ma pa tradition. In the colophon of *SM*, the author states that he studied in the presence of many Indian and Nepalese (Bal-po) masters and also in the presence of the Lo-tsā-ba Che-btsan-skyes of Bru-sha (Gilgit).[85] Now in the translation colophon (*'gyur byaṅ*) of the *dGongs 'dus*, it is mentioned that Che-btsan-skyes made the translation of the

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[82] E.g. *Thugs rje chen po'i gtor ma* (Vol. Pa), *dPal he ru ka gal po gsangs ba'i rgyud* (Vol. Ra), *Ma mo snang srid thig le'i rgyud* (Vol. Oṃ).

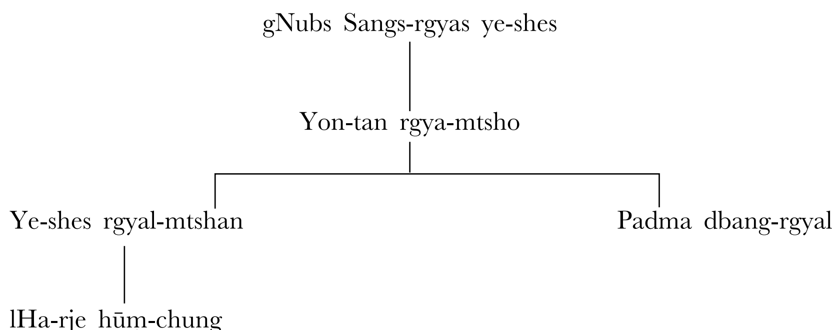
[83] *PT* 1287 (Bacot 1940, p. 100, 129).

[84] *SM* p. 497; also as *ban chung*, the young Vandya" (*SM* pp. 375, 497), and *sgyur ban* (*SM* p. 408). See note 85.

[85] *ban chung gnubs ban sang rgyas kyis/*
*rgya bal bod dang gru zhva (bru sha) sogs/*
*mkhas pa'i kha brgyud mnyes phul bas/*
*pandi ta'i thugs sgo phye/*
*yang rtse lung gi man ngag thob/* (*SM* pp. 497–98, 502), Cf. *BA* pp. 104–5.

tantra from the language of Bru-sha.[86] This tantra under the title of *rNal 'byor grub pa'i lung* is quoted in *SM* more often than any other source. It would therefore not be so surprising for gNubs Sang-rgyas ye-shes to be acquainted with this tantra. Elsewhere, the rNying ma pa school is accused of presenting a number of works as having Indic origin which are in fact "composed" by gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes. The critics include the Prince-monk Pho-brang Zhi-ba-'od and other scholastics.[87] However that may be, there is little doubt that the author of *SM* must have been a highly learned person and a great expounder of the Buddhist doctrines known in his time. The treatment of the subjects, the way in which his materials are organised, the subtle distinctions he makes between the philosophical doctrines and his patient concern for minute details all undeniably prove the fact that he was the first great thinker and writer in the Tibetan Buddhist history in the tenth century A.D.

The later rNying ma pa tradition tends to paint him as nothing but a tantrist addicted to performing black magic (*ngan sngags* or *drag sngags*). He is said to have frightened Glang Dar-ma by means of black magic and written *SM* in order to purify his magical misdeeds.[88] The dates of this personage are surrounded by total confusion as far as the rNying ma pa chronology is concerned. While one version places his birth as early as 772 A.D. and so making him a direct disciple of Padmasambhava,[89] another version puts him in the reign of Khri bKra-shis brtsegs-pa-dpal, hence around the late tenth century A.D.[90] However, all the late sources agree upon the following sketch of the gNubs family lineage beginning with Sangs-rgyas ye-shes himself.




[86] *K* Vol. 9, No. 452; *NyG* Vol. Da. According to 'Gos Lo-tsā-ba gZhon-nu-dpal, this work is identical to *mDo sde gdams ngag 'bog pa'i rgyal po*, Cf. Karmay 1981 pp. 202–4.
[87] Cf. Karmay 1980, p. 15; *NgD* pp. 277–78.
[88] *ChR* II, f. 266 et seq.
[89] *NgD* p. 278; *NGT* Vam, f. 571.
[90] *BA* p. 108. According to some other works, he is contemporary with King dPal-'khor-btsan, the father of Khri bKra-shis brtsegs-pa-dpal, *BGT* Vam, f. 568; *STh* p. 209.

According to *BA* lHa-rje hūṃ-chung taught Mi-la ras-pa (1040–1123) magic spells, therefore living around the middle of the eleventh century A.D.[91] It further adds that there was only one generation between gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes and Zur-bo-che Śākya 'byung-gnas who lived early eleventh century A.D.[92] *SM* itself contains certain allusions as to the approximate period in which it may have been written. It states that the lineage of the transmission of the Cig car ba tradition "in Tibet, where king(s) and monks had held it, was destroyed". A note clarifies this statement: "During the time of Glang Dar-ma, the monk Ye-shes dbang-po was caused to die, so the spiritual lineage of the teachers of philosophy was cut off".[93]

This passage, however, contains two historical problems:

1. The monk Ye-shes dbang-po is presumably identical to dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po, the first Tibetan abbot of bSam-yas and the successor of the Indian master Śāntarakṣita, but dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po is generally considered to have died before the death of King Khri Srong-lde-btsan (d. around 797).[94]

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[91] However, here 'Gos Lo-tsā-ba gZhon-nu-dpal is quite inconsistent. While in one place he gives lHa-rje hūṁ-chung (*BA* p. 109) in another place he has given as lHa-rje sNubs-chung (*BA* p. 428) and in either case no personal name is given. It therefore suggests that a total confusion between the two names already existed in his sources. According to the *rNal 'byor gyi dbang phyug chen po rje btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam par thar ba dang thams cad mkhyen pa'i lam ston* by Rus-pa'i rgyan-can (= gTsang-smyon Heruka, 1452–1507), Varanasi c. 1968, Mi-la ras-pa met gNubs Khu-lung-ba Yon-tan rgya mtsho and asked him for instructions in magic spells (pp. 40–41). In the *mGur-'bum* of Mi-la ras-pa, it is stated that Mi-la ras-pa learned magic spells from lHa-rje sNubs-chung (edition Varanasi, p. 154), but no personal name is mentioned. Now lHa-rje gNubs-chung here is probably a name of gNubs Khu-lung-ba Yon-tan rgya-mtsho since his father gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes is often called gNubs-chen, and also the *mGur 'bum* was mainly compiled by gTsang-smyon Heruka (Cf. G.E. Smith, "Introduction to the life of the Saint of gTsang", *SPS* Vol. 79, New Delhi 1969, p. 3). Therefore the problem resides in the question: Whom did Mi-la ras-pa meet? lHa-rje gNubs-chung (i.e. gNubs Yon-tan rgya-mstsho) or lHa-rje-hūṁ-chung (i.e. grandson of Yon-tan rgya-mtsho)? Practically all the later rNying ma pa sources e.g. *NGT* Vam (f. 579), *LPDz* (p. 292), *HYG* (f. 304) maintain the name lHa-rje hūṁ-chung as the son of Ye-shes rgyal-mtshan which would correctly put the dates of gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes right back into the 10th century, for Mi-la ras-pa met someone who is the 4th generation from gNub Sangs-rgyas ye-shes. If this is so, we shall have to reject the version contained in Mi-las ras-pa's "biography" which in any case was only compiled in the 15th century.

Padma dkar-po in his *chos 'byung* (*SPS* Vol. 75, New Delhi 1968) gives an even more divergent version. According to him, Padma dbang-rgyal had a son called 'Jam-dpal. The latter's son was lHa-rje Ye-shes-gzungs who taught Mi-la ras-pa magic spells (pp. 389–476). Ye-shes-gzungs is therefore the personal name of lHa-rje hūṁ-chung and in this case Mi-la ras-pa met someone who is the 5th generation counting from gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes.

[92] *BA* p. 109.

[93] For the Tibetan text, see note 44.

[94] Cf. *BZh* pp. 64–65; *KhG* f. 12a5.

2. The implication that the Cig car ba tradition was still alive when Glang Dar-ma began his monastic persecution contradicts the traditional account according to which the Cig car ba tradition ceased to exist as soon as it was banned. The continuance of the Cig car ba tradition right up to the time of Glang Dar-ma's persecution is an important factor in the presentation of this tradition in Tibet by the author of *SM*. At any rate, the passage we just have noted sheds at least some light on the problem of the period. It is certain not only that it was written after the event of Glang Dar-ma's persecution but it also gives the impression that when *SM* was being composed it was a long time since the persecution. The composition of it therefore certainly belongs to a period posterior to 842 A.D. and since no known works quoted in *SM* seem to date from the eleventh century A.D. or after it might well be ascribed to the late tenth century A.D. as certain Tibetan historians maintain.[95]

*SM* is not a work that gained any popular esteem even among the later rNying ma pa school. It was a rare work in Tibet itself, not even mentioned in the list of the rare works made by A-khu-chen Shes-rab rgya-mtso (1803–1875).[96] This is perhaps due to the fact that it has accepted the Cig car ba tradition in Tibet which the Tibetan religious tradition generally regards as officially banned. Nevertheless, *SM* was not a work that was entirely unknown. It is mentioned in the *bka' shog* of Pho-brang Zhi-ba-'od (latter half of the eleventh century A.D.).[97] As seen, O-rgyan gling-pa (1329–1367) has used it for writing his *BK*. In his *Lo rgyus rin po che'i phreng ba*, Klong-chen rab-'byams (1308–1362) records that his master Rig-'dzin Kumārarāja listened to the exposition of *SM* in the presence of Slob-dpon sGom-pa.[98] It is also mentioned in *BA* among similar types of work described as the great works on meditation of the *Rong* system (*rong lugs kyi sgom yig chen po*),[99] and so is in *JT* of the Vth Dalai Lama.[100] According to the *par byang*, the xylographic edition from which the present photoset is produced was based on a manuscript copy which belonged to Tāranātha (b. 1575).[101] The well-known historian

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[95] E.g. *BA* p. 108.

[96] *dPe rgyun dkon po 'ga' zhig gi tho yig* (L. Chandra, *Materials for a history of Tibetan Literature*, III, No. 79 (*SPS* Vol. 30, New Delhi 1963).

[97] Cf. Karmay 1980, p. 15, No. 12.

[98] *Lo rgyus rin po che'i phreng ba, Bla ma yang tig*, pt. Kha, Derge edition, f. 12b.

[99] Pp. 137, 145; Cf. also p. 125, n. 23.

[100] *JT* p. 99–5–5.

[101] *SM* p. 503. In his *GCh*, the Vth Dalai Lama mentions a *bSam gtan mig sgron* by Vimalamitra and a *bSam gtan mig gi sgron me'i brgyud 'debs* by gTer-ston bSam-gan gling-pa (Vol. 2, pp. 328–29). Whether these have any relation to our text *SM*, it is impossible to say anything till they can be consulted.

Ka-thog Rig-'dzin Tshe-dbang nor-bu (1698–1755) also has quoted it in his history of the Ch'an teaching in Tibet.[102]

## The doctrine of the Cig car ba

According to *SM*, the doctrine of the Cig car ba tradition is derived from the sūtras that teach the truth fully (*yongs su rdzogs pa'i mdo sde'i gzhung*) whereas the doctrine of the Rim gyis pa originates in the sūtras that do not teach the truth fully (*yongs su ma rdzogs pa'i gzhung*).[103]

*SM* therefore considers that the teachings of the Cig car ba tradition not only lead one closer to the truth but also that its means is superior to that of the Rim gyis pa. However, it also considers that the methods of these two traditions constitute "deviation" from the standpoint of *rDzogs chen* (*lhun rdzogs pa'i theg pa'i gol sa*, "deviation from the vehicle of complete spontaneity").[104]

*SM* treats the Cig car ba doctrine in detail according to 34 Hva-shang[105] and a number of Tibetan masters of this tradition. Certain works of two well-known lo-tsā-ba, sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs[106] and Cog-ro Klu'i rgyal-mtshan are quoted in connection with the doctrine of the Cig car ba, but the statement is not explicit as to whether these lo-tsā-ba were considered as masters of the Cig car ba tradition or simply composed treatises giving an account of the doctrine concerned. At any rate, these two lo-tsā-ba are not normally considered to be followers of the Cig car ba tradition. The translations made by these lo-tsā-ba and the works in *bsTan 'gyur* attributed to them contain no indication of their being masters of the Cig car ba tradition.[107] On the other hand, *SM* quotes from the works of several Tibetan masters mostly indicated as *sgom lung*, but unfortunately none of these works seem to be extant. Among other Tibetan masters belonging to this tradition, *bsam gtan gyi mkhan po*, the following names are perhaps worth noting since they are also attested in Tun-huang documents. Gle'u gZhon-nu snying-po, who composed a *sgom lung*, is the eighth figure in the line of the abbots of bSam-yas;[108] Lang-'gro dKon-mchog 'byung-gnas, author of another *sgom lung*, is mentioned in a Tun-huang document as one of the adepts who accomplished the goal of medi-

[102] *rGya nag hva shang gi byung tshul*, pp. 434, 445.
[103] See p. 95, n. 55.
[104] *SM* p. 65.
[105] *SM* pp. 118–34; Cf. *MBT* II, pp. 73–76; *PT* 116 (Macdonald, Imaeda 1978, Pl. 110–13).
[106] *SM* p. 200: *sngags kyi dge bshes* "a master of tantric teachings". This Lo-tsā-ba therefore cannot be an adept of the Cig car ba tradition.
[107] E.g. *gSung rab rin po che'i gtam rgyud shākya'i rabs rgyud* (*T* Vol. 144, No. 5844).
[108] *IOL* 689/2, see p. 78.

tation by not leaving any remains of his body behind when he died;[109] Tshig-tsa Nam-mkha'i snying-po, whom we discussed earlier, is also author of a *Cig car jug pa'i mdo* and a brief account of his life is to be found in a Tun-huang document.[110]

The phrase "simultaneous entry" (*cig car 'jug pa*) is explained in the following words: "they uphold their doctrine with the following example: if one climbs up to the summit of a mountain, one perceives all. By this they mean that in reality perception and the perceived are unborn from the beginning and that this principle cannot be sought through activity" (*dper na ri rgyal rtse mor phyin na kun mthong ba'i tshul gyis lta ba'i thag bcad pa yang/ gzhal bya dang 'jal byed gdod nas ma skyes pa'i chos nyid du/ don nyid jir yang ma stsal ba nyid kyi go bar 'dod de/*).[111] The principle of "non-activity" is centered around the theory of "non-imagination" (*rnam par mi rtog pa, avikal-pa*). There are several categories of this, but the *de bzhin gshegs pa'i bsam gtan* (*tathāgatadhyāna*) explained as being the non-duality of "tranquillity" (*zhi gnas, śamatha*) and "insight" (*lhag mthong, vipaśyana*) is the principal one.[112] According to *SM*, to reach the level of understanding of this last *mi rtog pa*, each school proposes a way of arriving at that goal: while the Rim gyis pa has adopted the gradual method, the Cig car ba begins with simultaneous means, but the object is the same. For the Mahāyoga school, *mi rtog pa* is no more than *de bzhin nyid* (*tathatā*) and rDzogs chen takes it to be a synonym for spontaneous truth (*lhun rdzogs de bzhin nyid*).[113] The author of *SM* therefore conceives his work as treating what he calls *theg pa so so'i mi rtog pa'i gzhung bzhi*—"the treatise on the "non-imagination" according to each of the four vehicles".[114]

He further states that these four differences in the understanding of the "non-imagination" are like the rungs of a ladder, one is higher than the other.[115]

The doctrine of the "non-imagination" is therefore not considered to be a particular teaching belonging only to the Cig car ba tradition, the impression is often given in works on this school. Neither do all the schools of Ch'an in China accept the "sudden" method. The so-called Northern School of Ch'an in China advocates a gradual method. While the Cig car ba tradition emphasizes the principle of "non-activity" in its practices,

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[109] *SM* p. 150; *PT* 699.

[110] See *PT* 699.

[111] *SM* p. 118.

[112] It is one of the four kinds of *dhyāna* (*bsam gtan*): 1. *byis pa nyer spyod kyi bsam gtan*, 2. *don rab 'byed pa'i bsam gtan*, 3. *de bzhin nyid dmigs kyi bsam gtan*, 4. *de bzhin gshegs pa'i bsam gtan* (*SM* pp. 53–56); *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra, K* Vol. 29, No. 775, p. 43–3–5.

[113] *SM* pp. 55, 59–60.

[114] *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 65.

[115] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

*SM* gives several instances in which the Hva-shang Mahāyana and Tibetan masters of the same tradition like sNa-nam Ye-shes-dpal stress the importance of physical discipline with regard to the contemplative posture, *viz.* to be seated upright legs crossed on a comfortable seat, looking down towards the tip of the nose, the tongue pressed against the palate.[116]

The practice of meditation consists of two elements: the method for entering into contemplation (*nyam gyi bzhag thabs*) and the method for improving the contemplation (*nyam gyi bcos thabs*). In *SM* these are giver according to the masters both Tibetan and Chinese as well as canonical sources and both Tibetan and Chinese treatises.[117]

It may be interesting here to note that the author of *SM* felt that it was necessary to give the reason why he has dealt at length with the teachings of the Cig car ba tradition in *SM*. "In (writing) the *rNal 'byor mig gi bsam gtan*, I have given a detailed account (of this tradition) since its close similarity to the doctrine of rDzogs chen might mislead one" (*rnal 'byor mig gi bsam gtan gyi skabs 'dir/ ston man dang/ rdzogs chen cha 'dra bas gol du dogs pa'i phyir rgyas par bkod do/*).[118] He further states that both traditions also use a similar terminology when formulating their respective doctrines. "The terminology of the Cig car ba tradition is similar to that of rDzogs chen. It teaches (the doctrines of) non-activity and non-searching, but (at the same time) it upholds the 'basis' which has no origination, as *parinispanna* and the absolute as unborn and void. If we examine this view, it still hankers after the "truth" and works on becoming accustomed to the state of voidness. Although it practises the theory of the non-duality of the Two Truths it does not experience it." (*ston men ni rdzogs chen dang skad mthun/ bya ba med bsgrub pa med par ston yang/ gzhi mi 'byung ba yongs su grub pa la dgongs nas/ don dam pa'i bden pa ma skyes stong pa'i gzhi la smra ste/ de la ni brtags na da dung bden pa re mos pa dang/ stong pa'i ngang la 'dris par byed pa dang rtsol ba yod de/ bden pa gnyis med pa la spyod kyang ma myong ste/ . . .*)[119]

The fact that the author of *SM* felt the need to clarify the differences in doctrines of the two traditions show that in his time there were already problems in presenting the doctrine of rDzogs chen as doctrinally distinctive from that of the Cig car ba tradition. Moreover, it is to be noted that this author seems to try to link the doctrine of the Cig car ba tradition with that of Vijñānavāda particularly concerning the conception of *parinispanna*.[120] However, the Cig car ba tradition also according to *SM*

[116] *Ibid.*, pp. 144–45.
[117] *Ibid.*, pp. 144–52.
[118] *Ibid.*, p. 186.
[119] *Ibid.*, p. 490.
[120] Elsewhere this same author lists different categories of *mi rtog pa* within the Yogā-

holds that the mind and its object are interdependent. "The mind does not rise without depending on its object, and the object does not appear without depending on the mind. The mind and its object depend on each other." (*yul la ma brten pa* (*sems*) *mi skyel sems la ma brten par yul mi snang ste/ shes bya shes byed phan tshun ltos te/*).[121] This is hardly in harmony with the author's own effort at linking the doctrine of the Cig car ba tradition to that of Vijñānavāda. On the other hand, it has been pointed out that rDzogs chen also have a close relation to the Vijñānavāda doctrines. More will be said on this question elsewhere.[122]

cāra system and states that the "non-imagination which appears in the state of voidness" is the meditation of *parinispanna* of Yogācāra (*SM* p. 55).

121 *SM* 119.

122 See p. 178 et seq.

CHAPTER FOUR

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RDZOGS CHEN DOCTRINE AND ITS LITERATURE IN THE TENTH CENTURY

In the preceding pages we have briefly examined the Cig car ba tradition in Tibet. The chapter on rDzogs chen in *SM* contains a very detailed exposition of the doctrines of rDzogs chen.[1] An analysis of it might therefore help us to form an idea whether the Cig car ba tradition has made any contribution to the development of the rDzogs chen doctrines. We have studied rDzogs chen's close connection with the Mahāyoga tantras.[2] The chapter on rDzogs chen is in the framework of an imaginary dialogue, so to speak, with a series of questions and replies. It begins with a short introduction giving an outline of the principal doctrine of rDzogs chen, namely the "Primordial Basis". It will therefore be useful to have this passage extracted and translated before going into the analysis of the rest of the chapter.

> "Now, as for expounding the doctrine of Atiyoga, the excellent vehicle, the best and topmost yoga, the mother of all conquerors, its name is the Great Perfection. Why? Because it gives detailed teaching with a view to imparting direct understanding of the principle of this non-sought spontaneity with regard to all existential elements. The sense of the spontaneous essence, which is the innermost treasury of all vehicles and the great "universal grand-father",[3] is to be experienced directly by "self-awareness",[4] but

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[1] *SM* pp. 290–494.

[2] Pp. 86, 134 et seq.

[3] *spyi myes*, the "universal grand-father" also occurs as *spyi gzhi*, the "universal basis". It is a term referring to the "Primordial Basis" from the point of view of subject in contrast to the description of this same principle as being the "mother of all Buddhas", Cf. p. 176.

[4] This term *rang rig* is borrowed from the Vijñānavāda school. It renders the term *svasaṃvedana* and refers to a perception involving cognition as a whole, but not in itself an independent cognition, Cf. Th. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist logic*, Neudruck der Ausgabe, 1930, Vol. II, p. 29. It is opposed to *gzhan rig* which cognises the external object (*kha phyi lta'i shes pa*) whereas *rang rig* is "introversive" (*kha nang phyogs pa*), Cf. *RCh* f. 79a1, 157a4, 192a7, 198a2; *PG* p. 50. It often occurs in the phrase *so sor rang gis rig pa'i ye shes*, the "intellect that experiences itself", *RCh* f. 157a4; *ShT* pp. 478 et seq.; Śākya mchog-ldan, *Chos tshan brgya dang brgyad pa*, p. 187.

In rDzogs chen this perception is presented as the one which experiences the "Primordial Basis" as in the text, and it is closely related to the notion of *rang byung ye shes* (see note 42). However, the concept of *rang rig* itself is, as in the case of *kun gzhi*, a subject of debate as to its real existence as a perception between different Buddhist schools. Cf. *Chos tshan brgya dang brgyad pa*, pp. 234–35. For Mi-bskyod rdo-rje, *rang rig* is identical to *ma rig pa*, see *gNas lugs bdud rtsi'i nying khu rnal 'byor rgyud kyi rnam bshad*, Delhi 1979, Vol. 3, f. 352.

not as a thing to be kept in mind. It is to be made clear to the "self-awareness". How one is to know of it? In this vehicle of the high yoga, there is nothing that can be measured by the discriminative self-intellect as expounded in the tantras, authoritative works and precepts.[5] Why is it so? Because all the so-called elemental particles have never grown new feathers or changed their colour from the beginning. It is the Buddha-nature, the "sphere of the great circle"[6] of the "self-awareness". Who then has seen this as an object? Who has demonstrated the logic for seeing it? To what doctrine does one entrust it? With what cognition does one cognise it? All the elements are non-conceivable, because separately they have no substance."

(*theg pa'i mchog rnal 'byor gyi phul yang tog/ rgyal ba ril gyi yum a ti yo ga'i don btsan pa ni/ mtshan rdzogs pa (p. 291) chen po zhes bya ste/ ci'i phyir zhe na/ bsam gyis mi khyab pa'i chos thams cad ma brtsal lhun rdzogs pa'i don/ gcer grol*[7] *go bar bya ba'i phyir zhib tu bstan te/ de lta bu'i theg pa thams cad kyi yang mdzod spyi mes chen po 'di'i ngo bo lhun gyis grub*[8] *pa'i ngang nyid kyi don/ rang rig pas*[9] *mngon sum khong du chud nas blor bzhag par byar yang med pa'i don chen po rang gi rig pa la gsal bar bya ba yang/ ji ltar shes par bya zhe na/ shin tu rnal 'byor gyi theg pa 'di la/ rgyud lung man ngag gi gzhung ltar/ dang po gzhal bya'i chos gcig la/ rang gi so sor rtogs pa'i shes rab kyis gzhal bar byar yang med pa ste/ de ci'i phyir zhe na/ chos so cog tu grags pa thams cad/ ye gdod ma nyid nas spu ma brjes mdog ma bsgyur bar rang byung gi ye shes thig le chen po'i klong du sangs rgyas pa'i rang bzhin la/ dngos po gzhal byar su yis mthong/ gtan tshigs su (p. 292) yis bstan/ grub pa'i mtha' ci zhig chol/ 'jal byed gang gis byas te/ de dag gi ngo bo so so ba med pa'i phyir ma dmigs so/*)[10]

In this introduction, strong emphasis is laid upon the theory of *gzhi*, the "Primordial Basis" described as the "great universal grandfather" and it is unchangeable since it never "moults or sheds its colour". It is further termed the "Great Circle". It must be pointed out that in the Cig car ba tradition this theory has no role to play, but it is the mind which has the predominance. On the other hand, the Cig car ba tradition also holds that both cognition (*'jal byed*) and its object (*gzhal bya*) are "unborn" and that this principle is to be understood through "non-action" (*brtsol med*). Here also it is stated that the "Primordial Basis" cannot be realised by the "discriminative self-intellect", but must be experienced through "self-awareness".

Following this exposition *SM* begins a series of six possible questions that may be raised in connection with the doctrine of rDzogs chen. Each question is given a reply with a detailed discussion based on several sources. The following extracts are those of the explanation of the author

[5] The expression *spu ma brjes* is preceded by another one: *gzhi bdag rang lugs* whose sense remains unclear.
[6] Cf. p. 118.
[7] The word *gcer grol* literally means "naked release".
[8] The text reads *lhun gyis pa'i . . .*
[9] The text reads *rig pa'i . . .*
[10] *SM* pp. 290–92.

of *SM*. As stated, his interpretations are here considered to be of interest more than the texts which he uses as his evidence. His explanations, very obscure in most cases, nevertheless represent the understanding of the rDzogs chen doctrine by someone who lived in the tenth century A.D. Therefore the quotations given after each reply are not extracted along with his explanations. Question I begins with a quotation and the reply to the question III is given by quoting a text. Apart from these two cases, the rest are all the author's own words as they appear in *SM*.

### *Question I*

"The *Srog gi 'khor lo*[11] says:

"Remain in the condition of space.
If the three worlds are investigated, there is really
neither *saṃsara* nor *nirvāṇa*.
If it is partial, it cannot be *sugata-garbha*."[12]

This text says "if investigated . . .". Now, is there not anything to be investigated in the rDzogs chen system?" (– *srog go 'khor lo las/ ma spangs ma sgrubs nam mkha'i ngang du gnas/ khams gsum brtags na 'khor ba mya ngan med/ phyogs char gtsen na bde gshegs snying po min/*[13] *ces 'byung/ 'o na khams gsum brtags na ces pa nyid kyis/ 'dir yang gzhal bya* (p. 293) *ni yod dam . . ./*).[14]

*Reply*:

"(The question shows) the ignorance of *tathatā*. The implication of the "non-avoiding and non-searching" is that everything is clear in the state of spontaneity. It does not mean that there is a separate entity which investigates (and another which is investigated). The straight path is the direct experience by the "self-awareness" without contemplation and without investigation. In my view this is the best way of measuring." (*de kho na nyid kyi don ma rig ste/ ma spangs ma bsgrubs zhes pa'i don gyis/ thams cad lhun gyis grub pa'i ngang du gsal ba la gnyis med la brtags na zhes pa'i sgra yang tha dad pas 'jal ba ni ma yin te/ rang rig pas ci yang ma bsams la ma brtags*[15] *ma dpyad pa nyid thog tu phebs pas drang po'i lam ste de ni gzhal ba dam pa 'dod do/*)[16]

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[11] One of the 18 Sems sde, see p. 23.

[12] The word *bde gshegs snying po* evidently translates *sugatagarbha*, but the Sanskrit word itself is not attested in Buddhist Sanskrit texts, see D.S. Ruegg 1973, p. 68, N. 2; Cf. also p. 184.

[13] The version of this work in *NyG* (Kaneko No. 7/8, f. 446) reads: *phyogs char brtses na bde gshegs snying po yin/*. The sense of the verb *brtses pa/ gtses pa* in this context is not very clear.

[14] *SM* pp. 292–93.

[15] There is a note in the text at this point. It reads: *sems bsgom rgyud las/ la la ma brtags pa las rgyal ba 'byung gi brtags pa 'khrul zhes 'byung phyir/*—The *Sems bsgom rgyud* says: "In some texts, it is said that the Buddha results from 'Non-investigation'; investigation is erroneous". The *Sems sgom rgyud* remains unidentified.

[16] *SM* p. 293.

*Question II*

"In that case, if nothing is investigated, how can one release the mind?" (– *'o na cir yang ma brtags ma dpyad na sems grol du btub bam/*)[17]

*Reply*:

"It is a release of that which cannot be released. Why? Because that principle is beyond mental investigation and in it no bondage can be conceived. Release is simply an appellation" (– *grol bar byar med pa nyid kyis grol ba ste/ ci'i phyir zhe na/ rtog dpyod las 'das pa la bcings pa nyid ma dmigs pa'i phyir tha snyad tsam du grol zhes bya'o/*)[18]

*Question III*

"By what thing can we illustrate that principle then?" (– *'o na don de nyid re zhig gang gis mtshon zhe na/*).[19]

*Reply*:

"The *sPyi bcings*[20] says:
The great ocean of Mantrayāna,
Cannot be understood
Through examples, logic, deduction,
Or inference,
Therefore the Mantrayāna,
Risky mystically,
But abundantly fruitful in practice,
Is vast and so difficult to fathom.
It can only be achieved by those who have obtained
the permission and precepts".
(*gsang sngags rgya mtsho chen po ni/*
*dpe dang tshad ma gtan tshigs dang/*
*rjes su dpag pa'i shes rah kyis/*
*rtogs par nus pa ma yin te/*
*de bas gsang sngags bdag nyid che/*
*dngos grub rlabs chen 'phrigs pa can/*
*bsam yas gting ni dpag dka' bas/*
*lung dang man ngag thob pas 'grub/ ces so/*)[21]

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[17] *SM* p. 295.
[18] *SM* 295.
[19] *SM* 295.
[20] *SM* 295–96.
[21] This text is one of the 18 Sems sde (Cf. p. 23), but is missing in *NyG*. No other copy of it has been obtainable.

### *Question IV*

"If they are all erroneous, what is the correct principle like?" (*'o na de dag 'khrul na don ma nor ba de nyid ji lta bu yin ce na/*)[22]

*Reply*:

"That which is non-dual from the beginning cannot be expressed through verbalism. As it is spontaneous from the beginning it has no name. The Great Perfection lacks a name" (*ye nas gnyis su med pa'i(pas) tha snyad med pa/ ngang gis brtsal ba dang bral zin pa la rtsal ba bral bar yang sgro gdags su med pa/ gdod nas lhun gyis grub pa'i(pas) ming med pa/ ye nyid rdzogs pa chen po la rdzogs pa chen po'i blo gdags bral . . ./*)[23]

### *Question V*

"What does it mean when one says that one sees the truth of the perfect principle by means of non-investigation?" (*de ltar cir yang ma brtags pa'i thabs kyis*[24] *yang dag pa'i don gyi bden pa mthong ngo zhes bgyi ba ji lta bu lags/*).[25]

*Reply*:

"In all the entities of existence there is neither oneself nor the other; neither object nor cognition. When nothing is seen, it is termed as "seen", in reality, there is not anything apart that is to be seen" (*chos thams cad la bdag gzhan gnyis med/ shes bya shes byed gnyis med pas/ cir yang ma mthong ma gzigs pa nyid la bla dvags tsam du mthong zhes bya'i/ nges par gud nas mthong ba ci yang med de/*).[26]

This reply finishes with a discussion in which the author of *SM* makes comparisons between the rDzogs chen view and that of the Cig car ba tradition on the above question of "Seeing the truth" (*bden pa mthong ba*) in the following words: "If the seeing (of the truth) is made an aim, it constitutes a deviation from what is contained in both the tantras and their treatises, for it displays the fault of having not understood the principle.

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22 *SM* pp. 304–5.
23 *SM* p. 305.
24 *SM* p. 307: *kyi*.
25 *SM* p. 307.
26 *SM* p. 307. According to Rong-zom Paṇḍita (*ThCh*, f. 126a3), the expression *bden pa mthong ba* (*satyadarśana*) is simply an appellation which signifies: "nothing is seen" (*bden pa mthong ba zhes bya 'di 'ang/ chos gang yang ma mthong ba'i tshig bla dvags te/*). But in his *Sangs-rgyas kyi sa chen po* (f. 80b1), Rong-zom explains the expression in another way: *gzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i rtog pa mngon du rgyu ba log pa la ni bden pa mthong zhes 'dod la/*—when the overt movement of conscious thought trapped in the dichotomy of the object and subject is reverted, it is held as "seeing the truth". A similar explanation to this, is also given in *ThCh* (f. 135a2).

In this great religious tradition, seeing the principle cannot be made an aim. Everything is within oneself. Though not sought, it crystallises itself without having been seen. It is the best eye. That principle is the only thought of the Buddha that has been disclosed. But there are people who have not understood this way, who have no confidence in the theory and possess no authentic lineage of the precepts. They are learned only in Lower Vehicles. They say: "self-awareness does not take the nature of *dharmatā* as an object, because *dharmatā* is unborn and void. This Gnosis has no object. When it perceives a thing there is no duality. This alone is the Great Perfection. In this, there is no activity nor is it seen". These people claim this as the teaching of rDzogs chen, but (in fact) it is based on the meditation of the Middle Way.[27] The *sPyi bcings* says:

"With the meditation of the sTon men pa as their basis,[28]
They claim it to be the supreme teaching of rDzogs chen.
It is like a prince stepping down to become a subject
and so is contradictory to the treatises".

(*mthong ba ched bu byed na/ rgyud lung gnyis su gol te/ bdag nyid du ma shes pa'i skyon yod pas chos lugs chen po 'dir don mthong ba ched du byar med pa nyid kyi phyir/ thams cad bdag nyid chen po pas/ ma btsal yang mthong ba med par rang gsal ba nyid spyan gyi mchog yin pas/ don de ni rgyal ba'i dgongs pa mngon du phyung ba kho na'o/ de lta bu ni ma shes/ lta ba'i gdengs ni bral/ khungs su brgyud pa'i man ngag ni med/ 'og ma la lce sbyangs pa'i gang zag kha cig/ rang rig pas chos nyid kyi ngo bo ma skyes stong pa de bzhin nyid bya ba la dmigs 'dzin med la mi rtogs pas/ ye shes kyi yul yang med/ dmigs pa'i dus na gnyis su med de/ de kho na rdzogs pa chen po yin te/ de la ni bya ba dang mthong ba ni med do/ zhes smra ba'i gang zag ni/ rdzogs chen du khas 'ches nas dbu ma'i bsam gtan la rten 'cha' ba yin/ spyi bcings las kyang/*

*rdzogs chen bla na med par khas 'ches nas/*
*ston men bsam gtan tsam la rten 'cha' ba/*
*rgyal po'i sras 'bangs babs pa lung dang 'gal/*
*zhes 'byung/*).[29]

### *Question VI*

"What is the significance of the "non-active vehicle" under which the Great Perfection is known?" (*'o na rdzogs pa chen po bya ba dang bral ba'i theg pa la dgongs pa'i don ci yod ces dris na/*).[30]

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[27] *dBu ma* here refers to the Cig car ba doctrine which considers itself to be *dbu ma*. Cf. *PT* 117 and *PT* 812.
[28] On this term, see p. 88, n. 13.
[29] *SM* pp. 310–311.
[30] *SM* p. 312.

*Reply*:

"(The Great Perfection) is the mother who produces all Buddhas.[31] It is the antidote of all activity that involves effort. Whichever path one follows and whatever method one adopts, without realisation of the Great Perfection, one cannot attain Enlightenment" (*'di ni rgyal ba thams cad bskyed pa'i yum/ rtsol ba'i las thams cad kyi gnyen po yin te/ thabs dang lam gang nas bsgrubs kyang/ 'di ma rtogs par sangs mi rgya/*).[32]

The author of *SM* continues this exposition quoting several texts and finally also gives nine different views of rDzogs chen held by Indian and Tibetan masters which are excerpted below:

"Generally there is no more than just one, but it is beyond the scope of the ordinary mind. Nonetheless, there are different ways of describing it according to different teachers. Some of them are given here. Whatever way one demonstrates it, essentially it is the same."

(*de ni spyir gcig las kyang med/ bsam las kyang 'das na/ re zhig dge ba'i bshes gnyen gyi bzhed gzhung 'ga' 'dir bstan te/ lugs mi mthun pa ni/ ji skad bstan kyang ngo bo 'dra ba la/*).[33]

i. "The view of the principle as "non-objectivity".[34] (Definition): "Buddhas and living beings, *saṃsāra* and *nirvāna* are all just simply appellations. They appear in diversity, but have no reality. The object of "self-awareness" is not removed by anything, it simply has no object. There is nothing that can be aimed at finding Enlightenment as if it were somewhere else or learning the principle as if it were an object of the intellect. How can this "single nature" have an object? This principle does not come about after removing the object. From the beginning there was no object, not even the term itself. This principle is within oneself. It cannot be sought by aiming at something. The sun does not look for the light of the glow-worm" (*gza' gtad dang bral ba'i lta ba . . ./ sangs rgyas sems can 'khor ba dang mya ngan las 'das pa ril kyang tha snyad kyi bla dvags stam ste/ ngo bo sna tshogs snang la gnas pa med pa/ rang byung ba'i ye shes kyi spyod yul thams cad ngang nyid kyis ma bsal bral ba la/ byang chub logs shig nas gnyer bar bya ba'i bza' ba dang/ don rig pas gsal byar 'dod pa'i gza' ba'ang med pas/ gcig gi rang bzhin la dmigs gtad ga la yod de med do/ 'di ni gza' gtad gsal ba las byung ba ma yin te/ ye nyid gza' gtad med de zhes bya ba'i ming tsam du yang bsnyad du med pa la don de nyid kyang bdag yin pas/ ched du gnyer du med de/ dper na nyi mas srin bu'i 'od mi tshol ba dang 'dra'o/*)[35]

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[31] Cf. p. 107.
[32] *SM* p. 312.
[33] *SM* p. 315.
[34] According to a note this view is held by Mahārāja of Oḍḍiyāna and Vimalamitra (*o rgyan ma ha ra tsa dang bi ma mi tra'i bzhed, SM* p. 316). These personages occur in a line of 23 Indian masters of rDzogs chen, see pp. 19–20.
[35] *SM* pp. 316–17.

ii. "The view of the principle as the great state of spontaneity. . . ."[36] (Definition): "The nature of every object of Buddhas and living beings is enlightened. It is enlightened in the great state of the spontaneous *dharmatā* that has neither beginning nor end" (*lhun gyis grub pa'i ngang chen por (lta) ba ni/ . . . sangs rgyas dang sems can dang/ de'i spyod yul ril gyi rang bzhin ni*[37] *yong ye gdod ma med pa nas tha ma med par lhun gyis grub pa'i chos nyid ngang chen po'i rang bzhin du lhag ma med par sangs rgyas so/*).[38]

iii. "The view of the principle as the Great-self".[39] (Definition): "All the elements that constitute oneself and others and all those which appear to oneself as 'I' and 'MINE' are neither modified nor debased. From the beginning, they are clear to 'self-awareness', the Gnosis without permanence. That is why it is called the Great-self"[40] (*bdag nyid chen por lta ba . . ./ bdag dang gzhan gyis bsdus pa'i chos ma lus pa dang/ bdag dang bdag tu snang ba thams cad/ ma bsgyur ma slad par ye nas rang rig pa mi gnas pa'i ye shes skyi bdag nyid du rang gsal ba la bdag nyid chen po zhes bya ba'i tha snyad kyis kyang mi thogs te/ tshig dang yi ges brjod pa'i tha snyad las 'das so/*).[41]

iv. "The view of the principle as the "Intellect born of oneself".[42]

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[36] A note states that this view is held by dGa'-rab rdo-rje, Cf. p. 19.

[37] *SM* (p. 320) reads: *rang bzhin nyid ni ngo bo nyid ni yong . . .*

[38] *SM* p. 320.

[39] Here a note says that this view is held by Vairocana.

[40] The *bdag nyid chen po* is further described as having five qualities called *che ba lnga*, the "Five great ones":

1. *mngon du sangs rgyas pa'i che ba* ("direct enlightenment").
2. *bdag nyid chen por sangs rgyas pa'i che ba* (the "great self as the Enlightenment").
3. *rang rig pa bdag nyid che ba* (According to *ThCh* f. 27: (*chos kyi dbyings su sangs rgyas pa'i che ba*) ("the Self-awareness as the Great self").
4. *de yin pa'i sangs rgyas pa'i che ba* (the affirmation of the 3rd).
5. *thams cad nas thams cad du sangs rgyas pa med pa'i che ba* ("Enlightened: at all time").

In *ThCh* (f. 216) these five *che ba* are given as the qualities of *bodhicitta* and are called "Great", because each of them vanquishes respectively one object: the "inferior view" (*lta ba dman pa*), the nihilistic view (*chad par lta ba*), the view that takes substance as absolute (*rtag par lta ba*), doubtfulness (*the tshom*) and the "Searching activity" (*rtsol sgrub*).

[41] *SM* pp. 328–29.

[42] This view is of dGe-slong-ma Kun-dga'-mo according to a note. This personage is one of 23 masters of rDzogs chen, see p. 20. The Sanskrit equivalent of the term *rang byung ye shes* is given as *svayambhūjñāna* (Ruegg 1973, p. 29). The sense of this as understood by Rong-zom is as follows: *gzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i rnam par snang ba de'i tshe nyid na gnyis pos stong pa'i rang rig pa tsam nyid yin par grub pa'o/ rang rig pa de nyid ye shes zhes bya ste/ don la phyin ci log pa'i phyir/*—"It is proved that (the "intellect born of oneself") is none other than the self-awareness, devoid of the dichotomic appearance of the subject and object. This self-awareness is called Intellect, for it is correct when it cognises its object (i.e. itself)", (*Rang byung ye shes chen po 'bras bu rol ba'i dkyil 'khor du blta ba'i yi ge, Rong zom bka' 'bum*, f. 559). Rong-zom defines *rang byung ye shes* more precisely in another work (*Rong zom bka' 'bum*, f. 144): *rang byung ye shes kyang sems rang rig pa tsam yin pa dang/ gzhan rig pa rnams kyang 'khrul ba yin pa'i phyir/*—"The intellect born of oneself is simply the mind that is awareness of itself. (In contrast), the mind that cognises others (i.e. external objects) is

(Definition): "All the elements that are encompassed by that which comes into being and that which decays are from the beginning enlightened in the essence of the one which has no cause. In the great intellect that is born of oneself, they shine transparently like sky-light" (*rang byung gi ye shes su lta ba'i lugs ni/ skye 'jig gis bsdud pa'i chos thams cad kyang gdod ma nas rang byung gi ye shes rgyu rkyen ngang gis bral ba'i ngo bor sangs rgyas pa'i phyi nang med par nam mkha'i 'od bzhin ye shes chen por rang gsal lo/*).[43]

v. "The view of the principle as non-activity".[44] (Definition): "In the system of the supreme yoga, the world is an unmade paradisiacal temple. Living beings—of whom there are six kinds are enlightened through the light of the "self-made vajra". The three kinds of worlds are in themselves in the nature of Buddha-body, Buddha-speech and Buddha-mind. The passions are transported into *dharmatā*. Misery is the great bliss of spontaneity. Obscurity itself shines like wisdom. *Saṃsāra* is of Swastika life (i.e. everlasting) without old age, decay and change, enlightened from the beginning. What can there be to be searched?"

(*bya btsal dang bral bar 'dod pa 'ang 'di ltar bzhed de/ lhag pa'i rnal 'byor chen po'i lugs kyis/ snod kyi 'jig rten ma bcos pa'i gzhal yas khang/ bcud kyi 'jig rten 'gro drug rang byung rdo rje 'od kyis sangs rgyas/ khams gsum sku gsung thugs kyi bdag nyid la/ nyon mongs pa chos nyid du bskyal btab/ sdug bsngal bde ba chen por lhun gyis grub/ sgrib pa ye shes su rang 'bar/ skye shi*[45] *g.yung drung tsher gyur/ rgas rgud 'pho 'gyur med pa'i ngo bor ye sangs rgyas pa la/ de 'phral du btsal du ji yod/*).[46]

The author of *SM* continues by giving a detailed list of twenty categories of deeds and as a source for this exposition he cites among other works, the fifth line of the *Rig pa'i khu byug: zin pas rtsol ba'i nad spang te/*[47]

The question of "non-activity" (*bya bral*) is considered to be an impor-

(by nature) delusive". For Rong-zom, *rang byum ye shes* is therefore a synonym of *rang rig*, but cf. n. 4.

*gzhan byung ye shes*, the "intellect born of others", in contrast with *rang byung ye shes* is considered to have been produced through the perception of *gzhan rig* (Cf. n. 4). Dol-bu-pa Shes-rab rgyal-mtshan explains the two terms as follows: *gdod nas chos nyid rang gis rang rig pa'i rtogs pa rang byung ye shes dang/ lam zab mo bsgoms pa las skyes pa'i rtogs pa gzhan byung ye shes so/*—"The realisation of self-awareness, the *dharmatā* from the beginning (realised) through oneself is the "Intellect born of oneself". The realisation that is produced from the meditation of the profound means is the "Intellect born of others" (*RCh* f. 78b6–79a1). As in the case of *gzhan stong* (p. 186), *gzhan byung ye shes* is also a particular terminology of the Jo nang pa.

[43] *SM* p. 340.

[44] According to a note here, this is the view of Buddhagupta, Cf. p. 61.

[45] For the origin of the word, *skye shi*, see Stein 1983, p. 174.

[46] *SM* pp. 344–45.

[47] See p. 56.

tant aspect of the rDzogs chen doctrine as we have seen, but at the same time the Cig car ba tradition also holds a parallel view which raises the problem of rDzogs chen as a distinctive tradition from Cig car ba. The author of *SM* is perfectly aware of this question. He therefore tries to dispel it in the following passage: "In one respect, the definition of "non-activity" is as follows: the saints would not be gladdened even if one had made them offerings of the whole universe. The spiritual stages could not be traversed even if one marched for an aeon. Even if one had searched throughout the four seasons, Enlightenment would not be found. Even if one had contemplated for a long duration, the principle would not be crystallised. (But) whichever way one rolls over, one is never away from the principle. The great principle is clear to oneself. Does one remain without doing anything then? The answer to this question is that meritorious deeds and searching activities do not bring about much good. However, it would not do at all if one abandoned them all. Why? Because in this great system, "non-activity" does not mean that one should reject and abandon everything nor would one do anything purposely. One remains effortlessly within the principle. If one understands this way, one does not stop oneself whatever one does, nor is there any cause to be sought actively. Moreover, in this great system of the practice of the ancients, nothing is rejected nor anything accepted. Even the sense of the "non-activity" is not sought nor does one remain without sense. Those who come in the future and who are fortunate enough to enjoy this religious tradition must know this way. It is called the "Manner of lying down of the great principle". One sleeps in the state of *dharmadhātu* without losing the "king of intellect".[48]

Those, whose intelligence for understanding this principle has become submerged and who are carried away by the river of striving, are like a person born blind. They accept the teaching of the Great Perfection and talk about "non-activity", yet inside they are purposely striving for something. To search for the sense of "non-activity" actively is like a woman who hopes to be favoured after having danced".

(*rnam pa gcig tu bya ba dang bral ba'i don gyi gting tshugs pa ni/ stong gsum mchod par phul kyang 'phags pa mi mnyes/ bskal par bgrod kyang sa mi gnon/ sgo gsum gyi dge ba ci byas kyang sangs mi rgya/ dus bzhir btsal yang sangs rgyas mi rnyed/ yun tu bsgom kyang don gsal bar byar med/ 'gre log spyi tshugs gar 'gre kyang*[49] *snying po'i don las 'da' ba med de/ don chen po rang la gsal lo/ 'o na ci yang mi*

[48] The phrase *don chen nyal mo'i tshul* brings to mind one of the texts attributed to Hvashang Mahāyāna: *bSam gtan nyal ba'i 'khor lo*. Cf. Karmay 1975, p. 153; R. Kimura, "Le Dhyāna chinois au Tibet ancien après Mahāyāna", *JA* Tome CCLXIX (année 1981), p. 185.

[49] *SM* p. 351: *'gro log spyid tshugs su gang 'dres kyang* . . ., Cf. pp. 53, n. 51.

*bya bar mchis sam zhe na/ lan du dge ba dang rtsol ba'i bya ba'ang skyon no zhes bya na/ yal bar 'dor bar 'ang ga la srid de mi 'dor ro/ de ci'i phyir zhe na/ lugs chen po bya ba dang bral ba ni/ yal bar bor ba min/ ched du rtsol ba yang min/ don dang bral ba med par/ brtsol ba med pa'o/ de ltar shes na ci byas kyang mi 'gog ste bya brtsal gyi rgyu yang med do/ 'on tang gna'i mi lugs chen po spyod pa ni/ gang la yang 'dor ba'ang med/ len pa'ang med/ tha na bya bral gyi don nyid gnyer ba'ang mi byed/ bral ba'ang mi byed do/ de bzhin phyi nas chos lugs spyod pa'i skal ldan rnams kyang byos shig/ de ni don chen nyal mo'i tshul zhes bya ste/ chos kyi dbyings kyi ngang la rig pa'i rgyal po mi 'dor bar mnal ba'o/ de dag gi don rig pa'i ye shes ni nub/ rtsol ba'i chu bo rgyun phyogs su khyer te g.yengs pa yi/ mun long dang 'dra ba'i gang zag/ rdzogs chen khas len pa'i rab gcig/ rtsol med kyi tshig smra zhing khong rtsol ba ched du gnyer zhing/ don gyis byar med kyi don bya bas tshol ba ni/ bro brdungs pas thugs zin du re ba'i mi mo dang 'dra'o/*).[50]

vi. "The view of the principle as the Great Bliss".[51] (Definition): "That which experiences all the phenomena embodying karma, passions and their consequent effect of suffering, when investigated, is nonexistent, if left alone, anything can originate from it. This *bodhicitta* has no substance from the beginning and is the purity of the Great Bliss. It avoids no pain yet shines forth itself in the Great Bliss. That is why it is called the Great Bliss, imperishable, inexpressible and totally beyond the mind's scope. It is this that appears within us. It cannot be found anywhere else" (*de la bden (bde) ba chen por lugs kyis ni/ las dang nyon mongs pa dang 'bras bu sdug bsngal gyis bsdus pa'i chos ji snyed/ byed cing myong ba'i rang bzhin nyid/ brtags na med la bzhag na cir yang 'byung ba'i phyir/ de la ngo bo ye med pas byang chub kyi sems bde ba chen po'i klong dag pa/ zug rngu ma spangs bde ba chen po rang shar ba la/ bde ba chen po zhes brjod pa ma 'gags brjod du med pa/ blos kyang bde ba chen po zhes par gzung ba ye bral ba ni 'di ltar snang ba nyid de/ gzhan du btsal du med do/*).[52]

vii. "The view of the principle as non-duality in accordance with the Supreme Yoga".[53]

(Definition): "The *bodhicitta* which exists from the beginning is effortless and is the same as the Great Bliss. That means that all known extremes are non-dual as far as the Great Bliss is concerned" (*lhag pa'i rnal 'byor chen po pas gnyis su med par lta ba ni/ ye nas gnas pa'i byang chub sems bde ba chen po rtsol ba dang bral ba'i don ni mtha' ji snyed du grags pa thams cad gnyis med de/* . . .).[54]

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[50] *SM* pp. 350–52.

[51] Here there is a note according to which this view is held by Kukkurāja and Śrīsiṃha. On these two masters, see p. 20.

[52] *SM* pp. 352–53.

[53] According to a note here, this is a view of 'Jam-dpal bshes-gnyen, Cf. p. 19.

[54] *SM* p. 356.

viii. "The view of the principle as the nature of the Single Great Circle".[55] (Definition): "Manifoldness is an aspect of the phenomenal world. It appears to those who understand the principle wrongly and to those who are still learners in the form of diversity. But to the "Self-awareness" which is *bodhicitta*, it naturally appears without any diffuseness. "Self-awareness" is enlightened in the nature of the "Great Circle" so that it neither avoids duality nor conceives of it. In words, it can only be called "One" since it has no "pair". It has no real name" (*thig le chen po gcig gi rang bzhin du lta ba'i lugs ni . . ./ log rtog*[56] *dang lam pa la tha dad par snang tsam nyid na/ rang rig pa byang chub kyi sems spros pa thams cad dang ngang gis bral ba thig le chen po'i rang bzhin du sangs rgyas pa la gnyis spros kyi chos thams cad ma spangs ma dmigs pa'i phyir/ tha snyad tsam du zla med pas gcig ces brjod du zad kyi/ ngo bo byid dang bral lo/*).[57]

ix. "The view of the principle as the natural basis of all existence".[58] (Definition): "This is a particularly correct view. Why? Because the absolute aspect of substance is inexpressible and cannot be debased. It is the Great Perfection of the Supreme Yoga" (– *chos thams cad gzhi ji bzhin par lta ba ni/ khyad par du'ang ma nor ba ste/ de ci'i phyir zhe na/ dngos po rnams kyi de kho na nyid kha na ma bcos ma bslad pa nyid pas a ti yo ga rdzogs pa chen po'o/*).[59]

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[55] A note says that this view is held by *lngas thu bo ra tsa nyas sti* (= Sras thu bo ra tsa hasti), one of the 23 masters of rDzogs chen, see p. 19. The sense of *thig le* is usually given as *spros pa dang bral ba* or *spros bral* (*aprapañca*) Lit: "without amplification", or "that which cannot be displayed", Cf. *ThCh* f. 217. The expression *thig le chen po* has evidently the same sense as that of *thig le nyag cig*, "the single circle" and as that of *nam mkha'i thig le* (see p. 70). The word *thig le* in these expressions certainly refers to the "Primordial Basis". I translate *thig le* by "circle" since here it has no sense of the Sanskrit term *bindu* "drop" which refers to *bodhicitta* the tantric sense. On this, see D.L. Snellgrove, *The Hevajratantra, London Oriental Series*, Vol. 6, London 1959, Vol. I, p. 135.

The *thig le chen po* is described as having six kinds of aspect (*thig le chen po ni thig le drug par (dang) ldan par bzhugs te*):

i. *dbyings kyi thig le*
ii. *dbyings rnam par dag pa'i thig le*
iii. *chos nyid thig le*
iv. *ye shes thig le*
v. *kun tu bzang po'i thig le*
vi. *lhun gyi(s) grub pa'i thig le* (*SM* p. 375).

For further detailed explanation, see *ThCh* f. 218–19. There is also a text entitled *Thig le drug pa*, one of the 18 Sems sde texts, see p. 23. In the Ch'an school, the absolute is symbolised by a black circle while the relative by a white circle. H. Dumoulin, *A History of Zen Buddhism*, New York 1963, pp. 112–18.

[56] *SM* p. 369: *rtogs.*

[57] *SM* p. 369.

[58] The note says that this is the view of dGa'-rab rdo-rje, rGyal po Dha-he-na ta-lo and of myself i.e. the author of *SM* (*dga' rab rdo rje dang rgyal po 'da' he na ta lo'i bzhed/ ban chung rang gi 'dod byang kyang yin/*).

[59] *SM* pp. 375–76.

After the VIth question which comprises nine different views concerning the theory of the "Primordial Basis", *SM* continues to give a detailed exposition on the methods of practising meditation according to the rDzogs chen system. It is divided into two parts. The first is on the physical discipline (*lus kyi bzhag thabs*), but it quickly points out that the rDzogs chen does not accept any kind of physical discipline unlike the other systems such as the Cig car ba tradition.[60] The author goes on at length on this theme mainly using the *sBas pa'i rgum chung*[61] in which it is pointed out that any kind of physical discipline presupposes bodily attachment. The second part is on the "method of how the mind enters" (*sems kyi 'jug thabs*) as opposed to the physical discipline. Here too according to the rDzogs chen system, there is no question of making the mind purposely to "enter" (*'jug pa*) into any field. In other words, the noumenal state of the mind does not have any object (*'jug pa med par 'jug pa*). This section contains a detailed analysis of deviation (*gol sa*) and obscurity (*sgrib pa*),[62] normally abbreviated as *gol-sgrib*. We have already had occasion to discuss this topic in connection with the *sBas pa'i rgum chung*. Here it is stated that from the stand-point of the rDzogs chen system, all the rest of the Buddhist teachings are "deviation", but it has also been pointed out that a lower vehicle is a deviation from the point of view of any higher vehicle, e.g. in the system of the 9 *Theg pa*, the preceding *theg pa* is a deviation from the viewpoint of the following or higher *theg pa*. This section on the *sems kyi 'jug thabs* occupies the most part of the chapter on rDzogs chen in *SM*.[63]

What is a most important point here is that in the tenth century A.D. the principal theory of rDzogs chen namely the "Primordial Basis" (*gdod ma'i gzhi*) was well formulated. The author of *SM* has no apparent difficulty in elaborating it still further by applying certain general tantric terms to it. As is well attested, the terms *bdag nyid chen po* (*mahātman*),[64] *rang byung ye shes* (*svayambhūjñāna*) and *bde ba chen po* (*mahāsukha*) primarily convey tantric notions, but they are applied to the theory always tinged with the idea of primordial purity. Other terms like *gza' gtad dang bral ba* (aimlessness, in a good sense), *lhun grub* (*an-ābhoga*) and *thig le chen po* may be considered as rDzogs chen's own terminology and therefore present no great problem when used to describe certain rDzogs chen conceptions. One may also consider the term *gzhi ji bzhin pa* ("natural basis") as one

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[60] *SM* pp. 403–05.
[61] On this text, see p. 74.
[62] *SM* pp. 428–44.
[63] *SM* pp. 405–44.
[64] Cf. *SM* pp. 200–01.

of rDzogs chen's own terms, but it also occurs in the form of *ye ji bzhin pa* in Anuyoga tantras, especially in the *dGongs 'dus*.[65] This is not surprising since rDzogs chen is itself after all a development of the tantric meditation of *saṃpannakrama* of the Mahāyoga tantras. Moreover, the *dGongs 'dus* under the title *Rig pa mchog gi lung* serves as one of the principal sources in *SM*. The term *gnyis med* (*advaya*) usually refers to a transcendental state where the phenomenal world dissolves into a noumenal state of the mind and so where neither subject nor object are conceived of. In this sense, it is a metaphysical term common to most of the Indian philosophies. However, when the term *bya brtsal dang bral ba* ("non-activity"), which is in fact a synonym of *lhun grub*, is used, certain problems arise. In the first place, it is a term common to both traditions of the Cig car ba and of rDzogs chen. The connotation of "non-activity" covers activities both physical and mental with a particular emphasis on mental searching. In rDzogs chen one stresses the point that one does not purposely conform to the notion of "non-activity" whereas the Cig car ba tradition aims at achieving the state of "non-activity". Such a subtle distinction is by no means always evident. On the one hand, the term itself occurs in the chapter on the Cig car ba tradition in *SM* only once and also does not seem to have been used in any of the Tun-huang documents on Dhyāna so far consulted. On the other hand, although the actual term does not occur in the earliest texts of rDzogs chen such as the *Rig pa'i khu byug*, the notion conveyed by the term is implicit in the fifth verse: "As (all is) already completed, one avoids any more searching activities" (*zin pas rtsol ba'i nad spangs te/*).[66] Moreover, it is significant that this notion is linked with Buddhagupta the author of the *sBas pa'i rgum chung*. In this work, too, the term itself does not occur in the main text, but in an interlinear note to clarify the sense of the verses 12–15.[67] It is therefore evident that the ascription of the theory to Buddhagupta in *SM* is of ancient origin. This corroboration also confirms that Buddhagupta is the author of the *sBas pa'i rgum chung* as the introductory part of *IOL* 597 states.

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[65] Kaneko No. 160.
[66] See p. 50.
[67] See pp. 72–73.

CHAPTER FIVE

# RDZOGS CHEN THOUGHT AND ITS CRITICS IN THE ELEVENTH CENTURY

With the eleventh century we enter into a relatively well known period in Tibetan religious history. It was the formative period of all the subsequent development of Tibetan religious thought, and was also a period of retrospective study of the religious practices prevalent in the immediately preceding centuries. New translations of Indian Buddhist works began to appear after a lapse of almost two centuries in translation activities. The more new translations of tantras were made the less authentic seemed to the Tibetans the existing old translations. Once again, tantric teaching was the centre of polemic as it had been in the eighth century A.D.,[1] but in the eighth century it was a question of suitability to the Tibetans[2] whereas now in the eleventh century the issue was the authenticity of the earlier translations whose Sanskrit origins were no longer available.

Tibetan Buddhism in general regards tantric teaching as indispensable for gaining Enlightenment, but at the same time, the question of authenticity, whether of the new (*sngags gsar ma*) or the old tantras (*sngags rnying ma*) has always been a source of anxiety for the historians, for no sūtras that were considered authentic confirm that the tantric teaching was actually taught by Śākyamuni.[3]

At the beginning of the eleventh century, lHa Bla-ma Ye-shes-'od, the king of mNga'-ris undertook the re-establishment of the Buddhist monastic

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[1] See introduction, p. 4 et seq.

[2] Different categories of tantras, such as Kriyā, Ubhayā, Mahāyoga, Anuyoga and Atiyoga are said to have been taught to different types of people according to their temperament and only the category of Ubhayā tantras were thought to be appropriate for the Tibetans and therefore were translated. *KhG* Ja (f. 105b) quotes the following passage from one version of *BZh*:

*ma ha yo ga mu stegs dge ba la gzud pa'i slad du gtsang dme med par bstan pas ma bsgyur/ a ti yo ga chos kyi dbyig lta bu ni ma rtogs par (pa) log par 'jug par 'gyur bas ma bsgyur/ sngags yoga nus pa can yang bod la nus pa mi 'byung bas ma bsgyur/ kri ya bram ze rnams dge ba la gzud pa'i phyir gsungs pa bod gtsang sbra chung bas ma bsgyur/ a nu yoga rme bag can la bstan pa bod rtog pa che bas ma bsgyur/ u pa ya bod la ran par brtsis nas ye shes dbang pos (gsol nas).bsgyur/*

This same passage but defective can be found in *BZh* (p. 52). Now a certain number of both Kriyā and Caryā tantras are attested in *TD* and it therefore does not conform to what is said in the above passage, but on the other hand, Mahāyoga tantras were the object of translation restrictions. As to Anuyoga and Atiyoga tantras, e.g. *dGongs 'dus* owes its translation to a period much later, but earlier than the 11th century since it is quoted in *SM*.

[3] For the discussion of this topic, see Karmay 1981, p. 197.

tradition in Western Tibet. He himself renouncing the world became a monk, hence the name of Ye-shes-'od. Buddhist monastic tradition had been supressed by Glang Dar-ma, but tantric teaching, particularly Mahāyoga tantras, had been a flourishing faith from about the middle of the ninth to the middle of the eleventh centuries A.D. However, it harboured many a practice about the genuineness of which the king began to wonder. In this connection, he therefore issued an edict in the form of an open letter requesting all concerned to refrain from their malpractices,[4] and encouraged young Tibetan monks to travel to Northern India in order to find out whether the prevalent practices were genuine or not. In this edict, the king indicates that he was particularly concerned with the practices of the sexual rite (*sbyor*) and the rite of deliverance (*sgrol*), and these according to him were practised under the name of rDzogs chen. Now it would seem that he did not really consider the practice of *sbyor sgrol* as a part of the rDzogs chen teaching. On the other hand, not a single tantra is named in the edict. This, however, gave rise in later centuries to various interpretations. Subsequent Buddhist historians too have been unwilling to specify any tantras that particularly expound the practice and that had been popular in the period in question.

In a paper to the Tibetan International Seminar in Oxford, I gave an account of the religious practices of the period as found in the edict and pointed out that it is *SNy* that the edict was mainly aimed at among other tantras, but no details could be given.[5] This is perhaps the best place to go into a more detailed discussion of this subject. The practice of *sbyor sgrol* is the main topic expounded in chapter XI of *SNy* and it is this tantra that had been very popular from the time of Glang Dar-ma's persecution, i.e. about from the middle of the ninth century till new translations of tantras were made in the eleventh century, but the tradition of this particular tantric teaching continued in later centuries. The commentary on this tantra by Rong-zom paṇḍita Chos-kyi bzang-po (middle of the eleventh century)[6] and the one by Klong-chen rab-'byams (1308–1363)[7] testify to the importance that is attached to it in the rNying ma pa tradition. This tantra was evidently also known in Tun-huang, for several manuscripts bear relation to it.[8]

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[4] Karmay 1979, pp. 153–57.
[5] Karmay 1979, p. 152.
[6] See *KC*.
[7] *NyP*.
[8] E.g. Part I, VIII and IX of *PT* 42 (Macdonald, Imaeda 1978, Pl. 48–52; Pl. 59–61). Part VIII more or less corresponds to the section on this subject in the commentary of the *gSang ba snying po* by Sūryasiṃhaprabhā, *dPal gsang ba snying po'i rgya cher 'grel ba*, Delhi 1976, ff. 308–17.

The wording of the edict concerning rDzogs chen does not permit one to interpret it in as sure a way as would be desirable. It states: *rdzogs chen ming btags chos log bod du dar/.*[9] For the orthodox, this means that many a false doctrine calling itself rDzogs chen was in vogue in Tibet. However, for certain rNying ma pa, Sog-zlog-pa, for example, it means, a number of doctrines which were in vogue under the name of rDzogs chen and the doctrine of rDzogs chen itself is not the object of criticism.[10]

As has been discussed above, the practice of *sbyor sgrol* primarily originates from *SNy*[11] and since it is this tantra that has been the object of criticism, one can hardly pretend that rDzogs chen had not been under criticism, for it is this tantra that also expounds the doctrine of rDzogs chen in its tantric version. The later rNying ma pa school makes a distinction between two different traditions of rDzogs chen. While in one tradition its source is ascribed to Vairocana, in the other it is traced back to Padmasambhava. It is this second tradition which considers *MTPh* as its fundamental text. Indeed, this text is intended to elucidate chapter XIII of *SNy*.[12]

The fundamental text of the tradition that follows Vairocana is the *Rig pa'i khu byug*. The doctrine expounded in this text is largely also tantric, but no indication of the practice of *sbyor sgrol* is apparent in it. Yet its commentary links the rDzogs chen expounded in it with those practices at least philosophically.[13] This means that the tradition of rDzogs chen emanating from Vairocana had been associated with the practice of *sbyor sgrol* in its philosophical sense from quite early onwards, probably already at the beginning of the ninth century. Therefore, whichever one of the two traditions the edict meant, both are associated with the practice of *sbyor sgrol* in the time of lHa Bla-ma Ye-shes-'od.

This king was concerned mainly with the religious practices which he thought went beyond the limit, but no philosophical criticism was made against rDzogs chen. It is said that the tantric teachings seems so contradictory that he thought if the monastic discipline (Vinaya) is the true teaching then the tantric doctrine cannot be so and vice versa.[14]

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[9] In another edition of *NgD* undated, this line reads *rdzogs chen . . . mang du dar/* (Cf. Karmay 1975, p. 150).

[10] *GLZ* f. 124: *rdzogs chen gyi ming gis btags pa'i sngags log mang po dar bas des rgyal khams phung zer ba yin gyi/ rdzogs chen dar ba zer ba ma yin no/; NgD* p. 441: *rdzogs chen bkag go zhe na ma yin te/ rdzogs chen du ming btags pa'i lta ba phyin ci log gis sar thogs pa 'di dar bas . . ./*

[11] *K* Vol. 10, No. 455, p. 5–3–8: *lha mo klu mo rigs ngan mo/ . . . sbyor sgrol bya ba kun byas kyang/*; *KC* ff. 352–92.

12 See p. 139.

[13] See p. 54.

[14] *GLZ* f. 187: *mnga' bdag lha bla ma lta bus kyang/ 'dul ba bden na sngags chos log/ sngags bden na cig shos chos log 'dra gsungs . . ./*

Pho-brang Zhi-ba-'od, the grand nephew of lHa Bla-ma Ye-shes-'od, on the other hand, is categorical in condemning rDzogs chen as being contaminated "false doctrine" in his *bka' shog*,[15] but he too gives no explanation as to the way in which it has been contaminated (*sres*). This prince-monk who lived in the latter half of the eleventh century was an adept of the bKa' gdams pa school and was also quite an important lo-tsā-ba. The part he played in the role of re-establishing Buddhist monastic tradition is no less important than the activities of his brother, Byang-chub-'od, but he remains an obscure figure in spite of his achievement in translation works. The Tibetan Buddhist historians seem to have neglected his activities almost entirely. Consequently western writers on Tibetan Buddhism too had no place for his role. It is only as late as the sixteenth century that Sog-zlog-pa, a rNying ma pa polemicist made an attempt to refute his assertion. According to Sog-zlog-pa, the prince-monk considered that rDzogs chen resembled the doctrine of the "Substance-view" of the Non-Buddhists (*mu stegs pa*)[16] on the strength of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* passage which according to him is as follows:

> "One sees lights and figures like a water-lilly,
> And a rainbow in the sky.
> All these various signs,
> Are to lead the non-Buddhists to the Path"
> (*'od dang padmo lta bu dang/*
> *ri mo nam mkha'i 'ja' 'dra mthong/*
> *mtshan ma sna tshogs 'di dag ni/*
> *mu stegs can lam 'khrid par byed/*).[17]

The question of light (*'od*) of course refers to the rDzogs chen theory of the "Primordial Basis" which is described as being effulgent, and also to the theory of the "Rainbow Body" (*'ja'-lus*). We shall have occasion to discuss these topics in another chapter.[18] rDzogs chen has therefore been the focus of doctrinal and philosophical dispute right from the beginning of the eleventh century A.D. The criticism of it seems to be centred around two points: authenticity of its source and validity of its doctrine as a genuine Buddhist teaching. The adepts of rDzogs chen therefore must have felt the need to defend their doctrine. It is against this back-

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[15] Karmay 1980, pp. 17, 19.
[16] *NgD* p. 473: *mu stegs rtag lta ba.*
[17] *NgD* (p. 473). This passage occurs in *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* in connection with the meditation on four kinds of *bsam gtan* (*dhyāna*), see p. 104 and it is stated that if one practises this meditation, one perceives the signs as described above (*K* Vol. 29, No. 775, p. 43–4–3. These lines also occur on p. 74–4–1 and p. 77–2–5 in the same sūtra, but in a slightly different context. In the Peking edition of the sūtra, the 2nd line reads *ri mo nam mkha'i me 'dra mthong/*
[18] See pp. 190 et seq.

ground that Rong-zom Paṇḍita Chos-kyi bzang-po seems to have been the first to devote a work to the defence of rDzogs chen. It is entitled *Theg pa chen po'i tshul la 'jug pa* (*ThCh*)—"The entering into the mahayānic system". This work was so far unknown, but it is of considerable importance. It makes no mention of either lHa Bla-ma Ye-shes-'od or Pho-brang Zhiba-'od explicitly, but that may be because of the importance of the royal family in mNga'-ris at the time. This great master was an accomplished lo-tsā-ba and is said to have made many translations.[19] Besides his translation works, he is said to have written a number of works on a variety of subjects.[20] *ThCh* and his commentary of *SNy* are considered to be the most important ones. He is one of the few who has the title of "Ominiscient" (*kun mkhyen*). 'Gos lo-tsā-ba gZhon-nu-dpal states that "there has never been any other person who is as learned as he in the Land of Snows".[21] Yet no western works on Tibetan culture have so far ever mentioned his name.[22] Yet his works have not been entirely inaccessible. Many of his contemporaries criticised him for having composed texts since he is not of Indian birth which suggests the fact that he was one of the early writers in the eleventh century. A distinctive system of rDzogs chen evolved according to his method which became known as *Rong lugs*, the system of Rong,[23] but it remains undefined since all his works on

[19] *DNg* Ga, f. 29a (*BA* p. 163). There are a large number of translations in both *K* and *T* under the name of Choskyi bzang-po as the lo-tsā-ba. As there are other lo-tsā-ba who also have the same name, most of these remain unidentified, but at least four translations of Rong-zom can be identified in *T* due to the fact that the translation colophons mention the names of the Indian scholars with whom Rong-zom worked. Texts Nos. 2450 and 2845 (Tohoku catalogue of the Derge edition, Nos. 1319, 1982) were translated with the assistance of Mañjuśrījñāna. Text No. 2785 (Tohoku: 1922) was translated with Parameśvara and No. 2867 (Tohoku: 2014) with Upāyaśrīmitra. While the Peking edition gives the translator's name simply as Chos-kyi bzang-po, the Derge edition clearly indicates the name by adding Rong-zom in all cases.

Another translation Rong-zom made is mentioned in *YN* (p. 446). Cf. G.E. Smith, the introduction to *The autobiographical reminiscences of Ngag-dbang-dpal-bzang, Ngagyur nyingmay sungrab Series*, Vol. I, Gangtok, 1969, p. 4.

[20] Recently two small different collections of his writings were published in India: *Selected writings* (*gsung thor bu*) *of Rong-zom-Chos-kyi-bzang-po, Smanrtsis shesrig spendzod*, Vol. 73, Leh 1974 and *Rong-zom bka' 'bum* (undated), a volume containing a *dkar chag* of Rong-zom's writings by 'Ju Mi-pham rnam-rgyal (1846–1912). Neither of these collections contains his commentary (*KC*) on *SNy* which is separately published (1976). Apart from religion and other subjects like logic, *kāvya* and Sanskrit grammar, Rong-zom is said to have written on agriculture (*zhing las*), animal husbandry (*phyugs skyong ba*) and dairy farming (*dkar she sgrub pa*), *DNg* f. 30b (*BA* p. 166).

[21] *DNg* f. 30b, 2: *bod gangs can gyi rgyud 'dir 'di dang mnyam pa'i mkhas pa su yang ma byung ngo/* (*BA* p. 166).

[22] Except in the introduction to *The autobiographical reminiscences of Ngag-dbang-dpal-bzang* by G.E. Smith, p. 4.

[23] The rNying ma pa sources do not agree on the question of the *Rong lugs*. According *ChR* (f. 256), the transmission of the teaching that began with gNyags Jñānakumāra

rDzogs chen are as yet unavailable, and *ThCh* which will be summarised below is essentially in the nature of a refutation.

Rong-zom Paṇḍita was born in Lung-rong in gTsang. From early childhood he began to show an interest in Sanskrit the study of which later earned him the title of Paṇḍita, but it does not seem that he had travelled to India as was then in vogue. He met several Indian scholar-wanderers in Tibet, from whom he could learn Sanskrit. He was a married man and had two sons. It is stated in *DNy* that no dates of his birth and death could be found, but he met Atiśa[24] and was a contemporary with 'Gos lo-tsā-ba Khug-pa lhas-btsas who was one of his doctrinal opponents. 'Gos Khug-pa lhas-btsas seems to have been an uncompromising critic of the "Old tantras". A *rtsod yig* attributed to him is extant and is a refutation of rDzogs chen and other rNying ma pa tantras.[25] Rong-zom Paṇḍita must therefore have flourished around the latter half of the eleventh century. His life story, based on records of his two personal disciples, Yol rDo-rje dang-phyug and g.Yug rDo-rje 'dzin-pa, is found in *DN*.[26] It is curious to note that while the account given by Yol rDo-rje dbang-phyug mentions *ThCh*, it is silent about Rong-zom's commentary on *SNy* and although the account of g.Yug rDo-rje 'dzin-pa relates a dream which Rong-zom had before he set to work on the commentary, no mention is made of *ThCh*. There is, however, no doubt concerning Rong-zom's authorship of both works.

*ThCh* may be considered the most important treatise on rDzogs chen written in the eleventh century that has come to light. The rDzogs chen master A-ro Ye-shes 'byung-gnas who lived in the early part of the eleventh century is said to have written a similar work entitled *Theg pa chen po'i rnal 'byor* also known as *A ro khrid yig chen mo*, but this still remains unavailable. Atiśa is believed to have read it with admiration.[27] It goes

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passing through Sog-po dPal-gyi ye-shes and gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes is called *Rong-lugs*. It is in this sense that 'Gos lo-tsā-ba gZhon-nu-dpal also uses the word when he describes *SM* as a text on meditation belonging to the system of Rong (*rong lugs kyi sgom yig*), *DNg* Ga ff. 16a2, 17a5 (*BA* pp. 135, 137–8). On the other hand, *ShK* (OM p. 495) and *LPDz* (p. 196) both link the *Rong lugs* with Rong-zom which seems to be more plausible.

[24] *DNg* Ga, f. 27b (*BA* p. 161), but according to 'Ju Mi-pham rnam-rgyal, Rong-zom met Atiśa only when he was a child (*MPh* f. 4).

[25] *sNgags log sun 'byin skor*, Thimphu 1979, f. 9b2–13a5.

[26] *DNg* Ga, ff. 27b–30a (*BA* pp. 160–67). The same account is given in *NGT* (second part, ff. 61b–69a) and bDud-'joms 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje reproduces the entire section of *NGT* in his *HYG* (f. 224a–230a). A short biographical sketch by Jo-nang Kun-dga' grol-mchog also exists (G.E. Smith, Introduction to the *Autobiographical reminiscences* . . ., p. 4, n. 7); *TTGL* also contains a short account presenting Rong-zom as a *gter ston* (p. 251).

[27] *BA* p. 1001; *GLZ* ff. 51a, 75b; *LPDz* p. 195. There is a rough list of A-ro's works in *ChR* (II, f. 255–56) and a special system of the Sems sde teaching according to the

without saying that it would be a revelation to compare our *ThCh* with this work, should it become accessible to us. The other work on rDzogs chen by Rong-zom Paṇḍita is the *rDzogs pa chen po'i lta sgom man ngag*,[28] but this work too still remains unavailable.

The primary aim of *ThCh* is to defend rDzogs chen and it is against this background that the work must be read. It is clear that Rong-zom Paṇḍita has made an attempt to bring rDzogs chen within the line of general Buddhist teachings, and then prove the validity of the doctrine. The arguments of the critics of rDzogs chen according to him impose two necessities: the need to prove its authenticity by examining if rDzogs chen has any Sanskrit origin and whether it can be proved according to the established system of Buddhist logic.

*ThCh* has six sections. The first section gives definitions of the passions (*nyon mongs kyi mtshan nyid*) and then goes through a process of reasoning that all the Phenomenal World is illusory (*sgyu ma*). This section is called "Demonstration of all Dharma as equal to the value of illusion" (*chos thams cad sgyu ma lta bur 'go mnyam par bstan pa*).[29]

The second section is devoted to what the author calls "demonstration of the reply to criticism" (*brgal lan bstan pa*), i.e. replies to the objections that may be raised against what is said in the first section.[30]

The third section analyses the different Buddhist doctrines of sūtras and Mantrayāna[31] and finally rDzogs chen itself. Rong-zom Paṇḍita states that rDzogs chen does not claim its own view to be objective (*lta ba 'dzin pa dang bral bar lta ba*), in contrast with other systems whose views are held to be so (*lta bar 'dzin pa dang bcas pa*).[32] He then describes rDzogs chen in the following words: "The topmost of all vehicles, the king of all the authoritative works, the gist of all the scriptures, the exposition of all tantras, the inner most part of all the thoughts, the essence of all the precepts" (*theg pa thams cad kyi yang rtse/ lung thams cad kyi rgyal po/ gsung rab thams cad kyi snying bcud/ rgyud thams cad kyi spyi 'grel/ dgongs pa thams cad kyi zhe phugs/ man ngag thams cad kyi snying po/*).[33]

The fourth section is entitled "The section on the system of rDzogs chen immune to logic" (*rDzogs pa chen po'i tshul rig pas mi gnod pa'i skabs/*).[34]

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method of A-ro is known as *Khams lugs*, the system of Khams, as he hails from Khams Glong-thang sgrol-ma (*DNg* Ga, f. 30b, *BA* 167; *ChR* II, f. 255; *LPDz* p. 195).

[28] *DNg* Ga, f. 29 (*BA* p. 165); *MPh* f. 11.

[29] *ThCh* ff. 1a–21b, 5.

[30] *Ibid.*, ff. 21b, 5–47b, 6.

[31] *Ibid.*, ff. 47b, 6–68a, 4.

[32] *Ibid.*, f. 63b, 1.

[33] *Ibid.*, f. 64b, 3. This passage would seem to have been quoted from a work, but no reference is given.

[34] *Ibid.*, ff. 68a, 4–83a, 1.

As the title suggests Rong-zom in this section first gives the definition of *bodhicitta*, a term in the rDzogs chen system which stands for the "Primordial Basis" and then sets out to show how rDzogs chen is immune to logic. It begins as follows: "Those men who have faith in the system of rDzogs chen will realise and enter into the system by just being shown it. However, those who are attached to the works of Sanskrit and logic, think in the following manner: all our doctrines concord with the definition that is given in Sanskrit and are proved by logic, but the system of rDzogs chen is opposed to logic. That which is contrary to logic cannot be accepted" (*rdzogs pa chen po'i tshul la dad pa'i gang zag rnams kyang/ 'di nyid bstan pa tsam gyis rtogs shing 'jug par 'gyur ba yin na/ 'on kyang sgra'i bstan bcos dang/ rig pa'i bstan bcos*[35] *la mngon par zhen pa'i gang zag dag 'di snyam du/ bdag cag gi grub pa'i mtha' 'di dag ni/ sgra'i don dang rig*[36] *pas grug pa yin la/ rdzogs pa chen po'i tshul ni rig pa dang 'gal te/ gang rig pa dang 'gal ba de ni blang bar bya ba ma yin no/*).[37]

As a reply to the question of Sanskrit origin, Rong-zom Paṇḍita picks up the word *byang chub sems* as an example and gives its Sanskrit equivalent, *bodhicitta* which according to him is a synonym of *rang byung ye shes* (*svayambhūjñāna*).[38] Here he does not bring in the question of the Sanskrit origin of the word *rdzgos chen* itself as is the case with later critics of rDzogs chen.[39] As for the question of logic, Rong-zom states that logic is an established system within the circle of those who hold the view of substance as an absolute (*dngos por lta ba*).[40] Three kinds of intellect are then given: "The sense-object form is the object of the intellect particularised by consciousness. Appearance is the object of the intellect particularised by feeling. The definition of the absolute is the object of the intellect particularised by immaculate Gnosis" (*dmigs pa ni 'du shes kyis bye brag tu byas pas (pa'i) blo'i spyod yul lo/ snang ba ni tshor bas bye brag tu byas pas (pa'i) blo'i spyod yul lo/ ngo bo nyid kyi mtshan nyid ni shes rab dri ma myed pas bye brag tu byas pa'i blo'i spyod yul lo/*).[41]

Rong-zom Paṇḍita maintains by implication that logic is construed chiefly through the first type of the three kinds of intellect, i.e. conceptual thought and this intellect is inferior to the third type of the three, the

[35] *Ibid.*, f. 68a, 6: *bstan bco.*
[36] *rigs*
[37] *Ibid.*, ff. 68a, 5–68b, 2.
[38] *ThCh* f. 170b, 1: *de la rnam par grol ba dang/ rang byung gi ye shes dang/ byang chub ces bstan pa'ang/ . . . tha snyad so sor bstan par zad de/ ngo bo nyid ni dbyer med cing gcig go/*
[39] See p. 140.
[40] *ThCh* f. 78a, 6: *rigs (rig) pa'i gnod pa 'di dag kyang khyed dngos por lta ba rnams phan tshun gcig la gcig 'gal ba dmigs pa tsam du zad de/*
[41] *ThCh* f. 69a, 4.

"immaculate Gnosis",[42] In the rDzogs chen system, it is this last intellect that has the main role in discerning the absolute.[43] That is why rDzogs chen is immune to logic, Rong-zom Paṇḍita seems to contend.

It is not known from what source Rong-zom derives this analysis of perception. The conception of appearance (*snang ba*) as the object of feeling (*tshor ba*) hence experience, is implied in the first four verses of the Tunhuang document, the *sBas pa'i rgum chung* and, indeed, Rong-zom himself explains these verses according to this conception.[44] He further states that through the first intellect we conceptualise a certain thing in terms of whether it exists or not (*yod pa dang med pa*). Through the second intellect we judge a thing in terms of whether it is good or bad (*yang dag pa yin pa dang min pa*) and through the third we discern in terms of whether an object is cognised or not (*grub pa dang ma grub pa*). The first type of intellect according to him is not even capable of avoiding exaggeration and depreciation (*sgro skur*) whereas the second is capable of removing those imperfections, but not erroneous conceptions. It is only the third one which can eliminate all erroneous thoughts (*'khrul ba yongs su gcod pa*).[45]

The fifth section[46] is entirely devoted to the elucidation of rDzogs chen theories. It covers much the same ground as that of chapter seven on rDzogs chen in *SM* which we have already had occasion to examine. However, Rong-zom brings in some topics which are not to be found in *SM*. It may therefore be useful to give a brief summary of them here. According to him, the rDzogs chen system holds the following attitudes:

(1) "All the elements (of the Phenomenal World and the nirvāṇic state) are viewed as being enlightened in the self-being of one single great circle, the *bodhicitta*" (*chos thams cad byang chub kyi sems thig le chen po gcig gi rang bzhin tu sangs rgyas par lta ba*).

(2) "All illusory appearance around us is viewed as the "play" of Kuntu bzang-po" (i.e. the Mind, *'khrul snang thams cad kun tu bzang po'i rol bar lta ba*).

(3) "All living beings are viewed as the field of profound enlightenment" (*sems can thams cad zab mo byang chub kyi zhing du lta ba*).

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[42] *Ibid.*, (f. 69b, 2): *'du shes kyi spyod yul gyi rjes su 'brangs pa'i blo ni dman pa'o/ tshor ba'i rjes su 'brang ba'i blo ni bar ma'o/ shes rab dri ma myed pa'i spyod yul gyi rjes su 'brangs pa'i blo ni mchog go/*

[43] *Ibid.*, ff. 69b, 5–70b, 6.

[44] See p. 71.

[45] *ThCh* (f. 69a, 5): *dmigs pa'i sgo nas ni/ yod pa dang myed pa las stsogs (la sogs) pa'i tha snyad 'dogs par byed do/ snang ba'i sgo nas ni yang dag pa dang yang dag pa ma yin pa'i tha snyad 'dogs par byed do/ ngo bo nyid kyi sgo nas ni grub pa dang ma grub pa'i tha snyad 'dogs par byed do/ de la dmigs pa'i sgo nas ni sgro skur gyi gnas kyang sel bar mi nus so/ snang ba'i sgo nas sgro skur ni yongs su gcod par nus la 'khrul ba ni sel bar mi nus so/ ngo bo nyid kyi sgo nas ni 'khrul ba'ang yongs su gcod par byed de/ . . .*

[46] *ThCh* ff. 83a. 1–132b, 3.

(4) "All objects are viewed as being the effulgence of self-awareness itself" (*spyod yul thams cad rang byung gi ye shes rang shar bar lta ba*).[47]

After this exposition, Rong-zom continues by giving an analysis of the "Five *Che ba*" and the "Six *Thig le*" which we have already discussed in the previous section.[48] The enumeration of the thirty *gol sgrib* and their definition are also given in the greatest detail.[49] Rong-zom then takes up the subject known as *yin pa gsum*, the "Three Beings" which it may be useful to give here since they are referred to in the Tun-huang document, the *sBas pa'i rgum chung*.[50]

(1) The noumenal state of the mind is called the Being of Kun-tu bzang-po since it has mastered the multifarious manifestations as the "Play" of Kun-tu bzang-po (*cir snang yang kun tu bzang po'i rol ba la mnga' brnyes pa yin pas/ kun tu bzang po yin pa zhes bya'o/*).

(2) Its object is called the Being of Kun-tu bzang-mo since multifarious manifestations are devoid of substance (*cir snang yang rang gi ngo bo ma grub pas/ kun tu bzang mo yin pa zhes bya'o/*).

(3) The two-in-one is called the Being of Non-Duality since that which appears to (Kun-tu bzang-po) is unborn and the unborn that appears is manifest in a multifarious form (*gnyis su med pa yin pa/ . . . snang ba nyid ma skyes pa/ ma skyes pa nyid sna tshogs su snang ba . . ./*).[51]

The "Three Beings" are therefore related to the dichotomic conception of Kun-tu bzang-po as the "subject" (*byed pa po*) and Kuntu bzang-mo, the "object" (*bya ba mo*).[52]

Rong-zom now dwells upon the topic of what is known as the "Three great *gDengs*":[53]

(1) The "state" (*ngang*) of the mind (*sems*) is uncomposed (*ma byas pa*).

(2) The self-being of the mind is natural (*ma bcos pa*).

(3) The "Great Self" (*bdag nyid chen po*) is spontaneous (*lhun gyis grub pa*). These three are further explained: "The noumenal aspect of the *sems* (*sems nyid*) is uncomposed, for the "self-being" of it never turns into something else however much it is defiled by the delusion of living beings. It is unalterable since the qualification of *bodhicitta* can never be improved however much Buddhas try to modify it through their methods. It is spontaneous since being what it is, it is beyond the reach of the activities of

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[47] *Ibid.*, f. 84a, 3.
[48] See pp. 114, n. 40; 118, n. 55.
[49] Cf. *ThCh* f. 90a, 6; see also p. 70, n. 52; 119.
[50] See p. 74.
[51] *ThCh* f. 106b, 4.
[52] See p. 156, n. 89.
[53] The text has both *gding* and *rdeng* (*ThCh* f. 107a, 2), but *gdengs* "confidence", "certainty" is probably correct. A different category of *gdengs* is given in *Ta pi hri tsa'i lung bstan*, *ZhNy* Da, p. 254.

crossing over and purification" (*ma byas pa ni sems can gyi 'khrul bas ji ltar bslad kyang/ sems kyi rang bzhin gzhan du 'gyur ba myed pa'o/ ma bcos pa ni rgyal ba rnams kyi thabs kyis ji ltar bcos kyang/ byang chub sems kyi yon tan bogs dbyung du myed pa'o/ lhun gyis grub pa ni de ltar bas na bgrod cing sbyang ba las 'das pa'o/*).[54]

Rong-zom gives yet another category known as the "Three roots of the Precepts" (*man ngag gi rtsa ba*):

(1) "The precept that does not rely upon authoritative works (*lung la ma bsten pa'i man ngag*).

(2) "The result that does not originate in cause" (*rgyu las ma byung ba'i 'bras bu*).

(3) "The *dharma* that is not comprised within the mind" (*sems las ma byung ba'i chos*).[55]

Rong-zom further elucidates these topics in the following words: "As *boddhicitta* is the essence of all *dharma*, it is the best "precept" that is to be kept in mind, but it is not dependent on the words of the authoritative works. Although *bodhicitta* is effulgent by its own nature, it is not composed of compassion (*karuṇā*), concentration (*samādhi*) and the discerning intellect (*prajñā*) which are elements originating in mind. Although *boddhicitta* is fully and manifestly enlightened, it has not been earned through the merits of good deeds and spiritual exercises" (*Byang chub kyi sems ni chos thams cad kyi snying po yin pas/ blo la bcang ba'i man ngag gi dam pa yin yang/ lung gi sgra la rten pa'ang ma yin no/ byang chub kyi sems ni rang bzhin gyis 'od gsal ba yin yang/ sems las byung ba'i chos shes rab dang thin nge 'dzin dang snying rjes bsdus pa'ang ma yin no/ byang chub kyi sems ni mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa yin yang/ bsod nams dang ye shes tshogs kyi rgyu las bsgrubs pa'ang ma yin no/*).[56]

*Boddhicitta* is therefore considered as being uncomposed (*'dus ma byas*), unaltered (*ma bcos pa*) and spontaneous (*lhun gyis grub pa*). It is the "self-being" of mind (*sems kyi rang bzhin*) and is luminous (*'od gsal ba*). It is not obtainable through any spiritual practice prescribed in books nor is it produced from the cultivation of compassion, concentration and analytic thought. It can be adduced from nothing other than the self, for it is within the self and has always been aware of its own existence (*rang byung = rang nas byung ba, ye shes = ye nas shes pa*). According to Rong-zom, the difference between the *sems* and *bodhi* is discerned in the following way. To "conceptual thought" (*'du shes kyis bye brag tu byas pa'i blo*) the *sems* and *bodhi* exist individually (*rdzas so sor yod pa*) whereas the "immaculate Gnosis"

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[54] *ThCh* f. 107a, 2–5.
[55] *ThCh* f. 107a, 5–6.
[56] *Ibid.*, f. 107b, 1–4.

(*shes rab dri ma med kyis bye brag tu byas pa'i blo*) perceives that when there is *sems*, there is no *bodhi* and when there is *bodhi*, there is no *sems*. In other words *bodhi* is the "self-being" of the *sems* (*sems kyi rang bzhin byang chub*).

In his *MPh*, 'Ju Mi-pham states that Rong-zom holds the view that *rang byung ye shes*, in the rDzogs chen system, is an "intuitive Gnosis" (*ye shes*) which is at the same time uncomposed (*'dus ma byas, asaṃskṛita*) and it exists at all time within the "Primordial Basis" (*gzhi la ye nas yod pa*). It is immobile throughout the periods of the beginning, during the spiritual practice and at the destination (*gzhi lam 'bras bu'i skabs thams cad du 'pho 'gyur med pa*). Further, it is known by other names, such as *dharmadhātu* that is luminous from the beginning (*gdod nas 'od gsal ba'i chos dbyings*), and Kun-tu bzang-po. This *rang byung ye shes*, Mi-pham continues, is described as being in contrast with *gzhan byung ye shes*, the "intuitive Gnosis" that is produced from other than oneself. It is composed (*'dus byas, saṃskṛita*) and is a production from cause (*rgyu las skyes pa*). This *ye shes* remains from the level of the preliminary stage (*śaikṣa*) only till the final level (*aśaikṣa, slob pa nas mi slob pa'i bar rgyun mi chad pa*). It is therefore *rang byung ye shes* that remains constant and at the Buddha level (*sangs rgyas kyi sa*) whereas *gzhan byung ye shes*, being a substance produced from cause, eventually perishes.[57] The term *gzhan byung ye shes* however is not attested in *ThCh* or in other works of Rong-zom Paṇḍita so far consulted, but the implication of it is more or less evident. Rong-zom therefore seems to view the "Primordial Basis" as a permanent and positive entity. We shall have occasion to return to this problem in another chapter.[58]

The last section,[59] the sixth of *ThCh*, is concerned with those who cannot follow the rDzogs chen system and for these he gives a general exposition of the methods of improving the mind (*sems kyi bcos thabs*). The work then ends with a short epilogue and the colophon.[60]

*ThCh* is an important treatise since it belongs to a relatively early period in Tibetan religious writing. Indeed, it is the only one of this period which treats rDzogs chen extensively. It goes without saying that Rong-zom must have been a highly learned personage. Throughout the work, it is self-evident that he treats his subject with precision and great care has

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[57] *MPh* f. 13a, 5.

[58] See p. 175 et seq.

[59] *ThCh* f. 132b, 3–137a, 6.

[60] *Ibid.*, f. 147b, 1–148a, 3. The colophon reads: *mkhas pa'i dbang po rong zom chen pos so/*—"This is by the great Rong-zom, the scholar". This short but pompous colophon does not sound very convincing, but no other edition is available for comparison. It is stated (f. 107b, 6) that *ThCh* was composed for lHo-sgom (*lho sgom don du 'di bgyis te/*) who was probably a disciple, but who remains for the present unidentified.

been taken in explaining different terms in accordance with their Sanskrit equivalents. Rong-zom writes in a veritable *śastra* style of which he seems to be very fond. The work is therefore purely a treatise on doctrinal and philosophical issues. It is said that Go-rub Lo-tsā-ba Chos-kyi shes-rab,[61] one of Rong-zom's opponents, was so impressed by *ThCh* that he resolved to become a disciple of Rong-zom.[62]

However, when it comes to the question of the development of rDzogs chen thought, it sheds little light on works dating from before *ThCh* although it is itself a fact of history in the sense that it was written in a known period. Many of the quotations remain unknown and not a single personal name of a previous author is mentioned throughout the work. Yet one would have thought that works like *SM* and the *Thegs pa chen po'i rnal 'byor* of A-ro Ye-shes 'byung-gnas would have made a contribution towards the development of the themes on which Rong-zom dwells. Not even the slightest reference to his own other works like the commentaries on *MTPh* and *SNy* is made. The only sources that are explicitly mentioned with their titles are three works of gNyan dPal-dbyangs[63] and certain texts belonging to the group of the *Sems sde bco brgyad*.[64] Nonetheless, these oddities do not overshadow the uniqueness of the work.

[61] Also Gu-rub, took part in translating a text (*T* No. 5470).

[62] *DNg* Ga, f. 28b, 4 (*BA* p. 162).

[63] *ThCh* ff. 111a, 3: *lTa ba yang dag sgron ma* (*T* 5919); f. 119b, 1; 125a, 6: *mTha'i mun sel sgron ma* (*T* 5920); f. 120a, 4: *lTa ba rin po che'i sgron ma* (*T* 5923), Cf. p. 66, n. 21.

[64] *rDo rje tshig drug pa* (f. 85b2 = Kaneko No. 8, 10); *Khyung chen* (f. 86a3 = Kaneko No. 8, 2) and *Byang chub kyi sems sgom pa* (f. 132b5 = Kaneko No. 14). Cf. p. 23. The *rDo rje sems dpa' nam mkha' che* which is also quoted in *ThCh* (f. 85b4) remains for the present unidentified.

# PART THREE

CHAPTER SIX

# THE PROVENANCE OF THE FUSION OF TANTRIC AND PURE MEDITATIONAL TEACHINGS (THE ROLE OF MTPh)

In the rNying ma pa school, rDzogs chen is considered to have come from two different sources. While Padmasambhava is thought to have preached rDzogs chen in Tibet itself, Vairocana introduced a certain trend of the rDzogs chen thought directly from India. What we are concerned with here is the text known as the *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba* which seems to be the only extant work on rDzogs chen attributed to Padmasambhava. It therefore represents the fundamental work of this particular rDzogs chen tradition.

Below we have made a rough translation of the work. It is short, but very concise. The first part deals with various doctrines of Buddhist and non-Buddhist origin gradually leading to the doctrine of rDzogs chen. The work is composed within the framework of the "Nine vehicles" (*theg pa dgu*), the classification of Buddhist teachings of the rNying ma pa school. Although the actual term *theg pa dgu* does not occur, it is nonetheless self-evident from the fact that it is divided into nine sections. It is in fact an early example of the *grub mtha'* (*siddhānta*) type of work in Indo-Tibetan Buddhist literature. We shall have occasion to come back to the question of the "Nine vehicles" later.[1]

A copy of this work is found in the *bsTan 'gyur* with the following title: *lTa ba dang theg pa la sogs pa'i khyad par bsdus pa'i bskyud byang*—"A short note on the analysis of different theories and ways".[2] However, it is the colophon title: *Man ngag gi rgyal po lta ba'i phreng ba*—"The rosary of theories, being the king of precepts", by which it is usually known and more often in its abridged form *lTa ba'i phreng ba* or simply *lTa phreng*. D.T. Suzuki has "reconstructed" the title in Sanskrit: *Rājopadeśa-darśanamāla*, but no evidence can be gathered that it is of Indian origin in spite of its ascription to Padmasambhava. In fact, the colophon does not contain any indication of its author at all. Neither *DS* nor *YN* of Bu-ston Rinchen-grub mention the work. Its presence in the *bsTan 'gyur* therefore suggests an insertion later than Bu-ston's time along with other Tibetan works, such as *YTh*. However, the recent publication of a volume containing several works of Rong-zom Paṇḍita Chos-kyi bzang-po preserves

[1] See p. 146.
[2] *T* Vol. 83, No. 4726.

another copy of the same work. It has only the usual title *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba*, but has a different colophon: *slob dpon chen po padma 'byung gnas kyis mdzad pa'o/*—"Composed by the great teacher Padmasambhava". It is this copy that our translation is based on. The same volume also contains a commentary on the work by Rong-zom himself entitled: *Slob dpon sangs rgyas gnyis pa'i gsung dngos/ man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba/*—"The rosary of theories, being the genuine work of the Teacher, the Second Buddha".[3] This is probably the first work commenting on *MTPh.*

Another relevant text concerning *MTPh* is the *Man ngag lta phreng gi lo rgyus rnying pa* mentioned by Tāranātha.[4] This would be of considerable interest, but has not been obtainable.

## The principal source of MTPh

The fundamental source of *MTPh* is the controversial tantra, *SNy*.[5] It is important to note that the term *rdzogs chen* in *MTPh* appears only as an extension of the term *rdzogs rim* (*saṃpannakrama*). We have therefore the phrase *bskyed rdzogs rnam pa gsum gyi tshul, viz. bskyed rim* (*utpannakrama*), *rdzogs rim* (*saṃpannakrama*) and *rdzogs chen* (*mahāsanti*).[6] rDzogs chen as an extension of *rdzogs rim* is quite current in Mahāyoga tantras. To give just one example, in the *sGyu 'phrul dbang gi gal po'i don 'grel* by Buddhaguhya, *rdzogs rim* is divided into three categories of *samādhi*. The last of the three is called *rdzogs pa'i rdzogs pa* and this is described as: *de phan chad sangs rgyas kyi yon tan kun brtsal mi dgos pas rdzogs pa chen po zhes smros so/*—"This is called the "Great Perfection", because from that point one does not need to make any effort to obtain all the qualities of a Buddha".[7] The phrase *bskyed rdzogs gsum* also occurs in *YTh*,[8] a work which could date from before the eleventh century A.D. The term *rdzogs chen* referring to a high level of spiritual attainment resulting from the meditation of *rdzogs rim* is also known in the teachings of the New Tantras (*sngags gsar ma*) such as the *Rim pa gnyis pa'i de kho na nyid sgom pa zhes bya ba'i 'jam dpal zhal lung*[9] by Buddhaśrījñānapāda (c. eighth century A.D.).

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[3] Delhi, undated.

[4] *Slob dpon chen po padma 'byung gnas kyi rnam par thar pa gsal bar byed pa'i yi ge yid ches gsum ldan, RT* Vol. Ka, f. 14a5.

[5] *K* Vol. 10, No. 455; Kaneko No. 187. According to *GLZ* (p. 798), it was dBus-pa Blogsal sangs-rgyas-'bum (14th cent. A.D.) who included the section of the rNying ma pa tantras in the *bKa' 'gyur.*

[6] *MTG* p. 86, Cf. p. 165; *KC* f. 58–59.

[7] *T* Vol. 83, No. 4762, p. 252–1–1, Cf. *KC* f. 58–59.

[8] P. 89–3–4.

[9] *T* Vol. 65, No. 2716, p. 9–5–8.

## The gSang ba snying po (SNy)

This tantra is the basic work of Māyājāla tantras and in the rNying ma pa school, one of the three principal texts known as *mdo sgyu sems gsum, viz. mDo dgongs 'dus*,[10] *sGyu 'phrul gsang ba snying po*,[11] and *Byang chub kyi sems kun byed rgyal po*.[12] Little is known of this work to Western scholars apart from the brief discussion of it in *BA*.[13] In Tibet itself, it had been the subject of controversy centering upon its authenticity from the eleventh century onwards. According to Rong-zom, *MTPh* was composed as a note to chapter XIII of *SNy*: "The precept, the rosary of viewpoints, was composed as an accessory to chapter XIII of the *gSang ba snying po*, explicating the mode in which all the elements are realised as spontaneous from the beginning in the Great Perfection" (*dpal gsang ba'i snying po las/ chos thams cad ye nas rdzogs pa chen por lhun gyis grub pa'i tshul bstan pa man ngag gi le 'u la 'jug pa'i yan lag tu man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba 'di mdzad do/*).[14] The same chapter is known by other titles: *gSang ba man ngag*—"The hidden precept" or *rDzogs pa chen po lhun gyis grub pa'i man ngag*—"The precept of the spontaneity of the Great Perfection".[15] Other works related to the same chapter are also given in *KC* by Rong-zom: *bDe ba chen po man ngag* by Nyin-byed seng-ge and *'Chi ka ma'i man ngag* by Vimalamitra.[16] These two works are connected with different aspects of the rDzogs chen practice. While the first is described as an instruction on the practice of *sbyor ba* (sexual union), the second is concerned with meditation at the moment of death and related to the practice of *sgrol ba* (deliverance). Since *SNy* is taken as the principal source of *MTPh* and rDzogs chen is presented in *MTPh* as a stage still higher than *rdzogs rim*, it is of interest to go into some details of the history of this tantra. According to the rNying ma pa account, *SNy* was translated into Tibetan in the eighth century A.D.,[17] but no mention of it is made in *TD*. However, this *dkar chag* is at any rate reticient with regard to tantric works in general by reason of the royal decrees in the late eighth century A.D.[18] It is therefore not surprising that we do not find it in the *dkar chag*. The existence of this tantra in the ninth century is however quite certain since it was the most popular tantra in use at the beginning of the tenth century A.D. It is this tantra that is the target of criticism in the *bka' shog*

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10 *K* Vol. 9, No. 452; Kaneko No. 160, f. 1–537.
11 See note 5.
12 *K* Vol. 9, No. 451; Kaneko No. 1, f. 1–220. On this work, see p. 207.
13 Pp. 103–4.
14 *MTG* p. 20.
15 *KC* f. 348, 365.
16 *Ibid.*, f. 355–56. The second work is also mentioned in *NyP* f. 169a.
17 *NGT* (sMad cha), f. 510.
18 Cf. p. 5.

issued by lHa Bla-ma Ye-shes-'od.[19] The eleventh chapter is devoted to the exposition of such practices as *sbyor* and *sgrol*. The *bka' shog* was followed by Lo-tsā-ba Rin-chen bzang-po who is said to have refuted these tantric practices considered to be improper in his famous *sNgags log sun 'byin*.[20] Pho-brang Zhi-ba-'od, too, followed suit.[21]

Other critics spared no effort to demonstrate that *SNy* was written by Vairocana in secret and then claimed as a genuine tantra. For this reason he is said to have been banished to Tsha-ba-rong.[22] The problem of its authenticity was only solved when a Sanskrit manuscript copy is said to have been discovered in bSam-yas through the effort of bCom-ldan rig-ral. This master, a critic of the *Kalacakratantra*, is said to have written a short work entitled: *gSang snying sgrub pa'i rgyan* in order to prove the authenticity of *SNy*.[23] Because of the controversy over *SNy*, rDzogs chen inevitably also came to be viewed as an untenable doctrine by other sects.

## The critics of MTPh

'Bri-gung dPal-'dzin (c. 14th) is the best example among the critics of rDzogs chen. He identified *SNy*, quoted in *MTPh*, with the *Guhyasamāja* so that *MTPh* after all would be acceptable as an authentic work. He states:

> "As an instruction to the practice of the king of Tantras (i.e. *Guhyasamāja*)
> in a condensed form,
> (Padmasambhava) composed the precept,
> The Rosary of viewpoints"
> (*rgyud rgyal bsdus pa'i nyams len du/*
> *man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba mdzad*).[24]

This assertion can hardly be justified since there is no apparent connection whatsoever between *MTPh* and *Guhyasamāja*. The chief source of *MTPh* as has been pointed out is *SNy* and the quotations from *SNy* in *MTPh* can be traced back to it. It is true that *MTPh* quotes from a certain tantra also called *gSang ba 'dus pa*, but this tantra however remains unidentified. Elsewhere, 'Bri-gung dPal-'dzin maintains that *MTPh* is not at all a work concerned with the doctrine of rDzogs chen, but Atiyoga:

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[19] Karmay 1979, p. 151.
[20] *DS* p. 1049; *NgD* p. 388.
[21] Karmay 1980, p. 11 et seq.
[22] *NgD* p. 275.
[23] *ChR* II, f. 357–61; *GCh* Vol. 4, 397; *NgD* p. 275; *LShG* p. 20; *GLZ* p. 781.
[24] *Ch* p. 265.

"During the early spread of the Doctrine in Tibet,
There was the practice of giving the *abhiṣeka* of *Guhyasamāja*,
And also there was the *MTPh* . . . . . . . .,
It can be known from the *Bla bzhed*, and the *sBa bzhed*,
And the catalogues: *lDan dkar ma* and *'Phang thang ma*;
In these authentic catalogues,
Which are taken as "testimony" by scholars,
There is no mention of any translations having been made of works on rDzogs chen,
When the ancient tantras of the rNying ma pa were translated",
(*bod 'dir bstan pa snga dar la/*
*gsang ba 'dus pa'i dbang bskur dang/*
*man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba byung/* . . . . .
*bla bzhed sba bzhed gnyis ka dang/*
*ldan dkar ma dang 'phang thang ma/*
*dkar chag gnyis ka ltas na shes/*
*mkhas pa(s) dpang du byed pa yi/*
*dkar chag khung ma de dag las/*
*snga 'gyur gsang sngags rnying ma'i tshe/*
*rdzogs chen bsgyur ba ma bshad do/*).[25]

Dpal-'dzin therefore is of the opinion that no work on rDzogs chen existed before the persecution of the Buddhist monastic system by King Glang Dar-ma (d.842). He rejects the Sanskrit word *mahāsanti* from which the term *rdzogs chen* is said to have been translated, and further states that the term *rdzogs chen* is nowhere attested in the sNgags gsar ma.[26]

'Gos Lo-tsā-ba gZhon-nu-dpal[27] was the first to bring out the question of existence of the term *rdzogs chen* in the sNgags gsar ma in order to counter dPal-'dzin on behalf of the rNying ma pa by producing a line from the *'Jam dpal zhal lung* of Buddhaśrījñānapāda: *rdzogs pa chen po ye shes spyi gzugs can/*—"The Great Perfection is the embodiment of general wisdom".[28] Here the term certainly refers to a high level of spiritual attainment reached through the practice of *rdzogs rim* meditation already discussed. However, the work in question was probably translated only in the eleventh century A.D. and it is not easy to guess what the original Sanskrit term was in the line.

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[25] *Ch* p. 385.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 307.
[27] *DNg* Pt. 3, f. 31a (*BA* p. 168).
[28] *T* Vol. 65, No. 2716, p. 9–5–8. 'Gos Lo-tsā-ba gZhon-nu-dpal without giving any references states that Vitapāda (sMan-zhabs) explained the term *rdzogs chen* as "meditation on the 'proper object'" and this explanation according to G.N. Roerich (*BA* p. 168) is in *Caturangasādhanasamantabhadrīnāmatika* of Vitapāda (Vol. 65, No. 2735), but in this work there is no such explanation, see p. 201–1–1 where there is a discussion on the term *rdzogs chen*. On the other hand, in his *mDzes pa'i me tog ces bya ba'i rim pa gnyis pa'i de kho na nyid sgom pa zhal gyi lung gi 'grel ba* (Vol. 65, No. 2729, p. 68–4–3), Vitapāda explains that the term *rdzogs chen* refers to *rim pa gnyis pa* (i.e. *rdzogs rim*): *rdzogs pa chen po zhes bya ba ni rim pa gnyis pa'o/*.

Nevertheless, this rather weak argument was followed by the Vth Dalai Lama[29] and other polemicists, like Sog-zlog-pa.[30] On the other hand, it was rejected by the dGe lugs pa critic dPal-mang dKon-mchog rgyal-mtshan. According to him, the line of the *'Jam dpal zhal lung* simply refers to *gzugs sku* (*rūpakāya*).[31] So the argument continued.

In short, dPal-'dzin maintains that the term *rdzogs chen* is a Tibetan creation and is not known in Indian works. Moreover, the term implies the teachings of Hva-shang Mahāyāna and is therefore doctrinally different from Atiyoga of *MTPh*, but dPal-'dzin continues, *MTPh* itself was "transformed" (*bsgyur ba*) into the doctrine of rDzogs chen and particularly it was gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes who "mixed" (*sres*) the contents of *MTPh* with the doctrine of Hva-shang.[32]

dPal-'dzin's position with regard to rDzogs chen is therefore similar to that of Sa-paṇ Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan according to which the Mahāmudrā of sGam-po-pa is the "Chinese system of rDzogs chen" (*rgya nag lugs kyi rdzogs chen*). For dPal-'dzin, it would seem that *MTPh* in the present form is only apocryphal. However, unless we find an old copy of *MTPh* dating back to the eighth or ninth centuries A.D. and then compare it with the present text, there is no means of verifying his claim. Contrary to what he says, *MTPh* is quoted in *SM*. gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes, the author of *SM* is the earliest Tibetan author to have given a coherent exposition of the different doctrines, *viz*. Rim gyis pa, Cig car ba, Mahāyoga and rDzogs chen. There is no evidence whatsoever that he "mixed" the teachings contained in *MTPh* with the doctrines of Hva-shang to judge from the reading of *SM*.

## The antiquity of MTPh

dPal-'dzin nevertheless, holds the view that *MTPh* in its original composition belonged to the period of "The early spread of the Doctrine" (*bstan pa snga dar*), i.e. eighth century A.D.[33] This to some extent is corroborated by the fact that it is quoted in *SM* which shows that its antiquity is beyond doubt. Two passages from it are quoted under its abridged title *lTa phreng* in chapter VI devoted to the doctrines of Mahāyoga tantras. The fact that it is not quoted in chapter VII which is on rDzogs chen is not surprising since *MTPh* is fundamentally a work devoted to the exposition of

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[29] *GCh* Vol. 4, p. 399.
[30] *NgD* p. 307.
[31] *Grub mtha'i dris lan phyogs lhung mun sel snang ba*, p. 605.
[32] *Ch* (p. 277): *khyad par hva shang grub mtha' dang/ man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba sres/*.
[33] *Ibid*., p. 385.

*saṃpannakrama* and its ultimate result Mahāsanti as expounded in *SNy*, the basic text of the Mahāyoga tantras.

In chapter VI of *SM*, the usual two types of meditation method are given: Rim gyis pa (gradualist) and Cig car ba (simultaneist) with which an adept must embark as suits him on the practice of Mahāyoga tantras. The works that teach the second method are called *cig car 'jug pa'i gzhung*—"the works concerned with the simultaneous entry". In order to exemplify such a work, a note in the text gives: *slob dpon pad ma'i lta phreng la sogs*—"the *lTa phreng* of the Teacher Padma, etc."[34] It is therefore clear that in the time of the author of *SM, MTPh* was already ascribed to Padmasambhava and also considered as being a work containing the teaching of the simultaneous method. This is perhaps why dPal-'dzin writes that gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes has "mixed" the contents of *MTPh* with the doctrine of Hva-shang.

The two passages of *MTPh* quoted in *SM* under the abridged title *lTa phreng* are as follows:

> *mngon sum par rtogs ces bya ba ni/ lung dang man ngag gi tshig tsam la brten pa yang ma yin/ lung dang man ngag 'gal ba yang ma yin par rang gi rigs (rig) pas blo 'i gting tu yid ches pas mngon sum du rtogs pa'o/*[35]

The other passage also quoted under the abridged title:

> *chos thams cad ni yongs kyis 'od gsal ba'o/ rang bzhin gyis mya ngan las 'das pa 'o/*[36]

These quotations suggest that at least from the time of the author of *SM*, gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes around late tenth century A.D., the text *MTPh* has not gone through much change although in the first quotation a few words have been missed out which can be found in the other copies. The second passage, on the other hand, is not an integral part of *MTPh*. It is simply a part of a passage quoted from an unidentified source in *MTPh* itself.[37]

The next source that refers to *MTPh* and may be considered fairly old is *BZh*. According to this, when Padmasambhava was about to leave Tibet, he "composed" *MTPh* and said to his disciples: "the theory of my hidden teaching is in accordance with *dharmakāya*. Its practice is in accordance with the Bodhi (sattvayānic) approach. With the theory, one keeps up the practice. If not, by itself theory will become neither of virtue nor vice, and a nihilistic view might be produced and that must not be cultivated. But if the theory follows the practice, one will be fettered by the

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[34] *SM* p. 238.
[35] *Ibid.*, p. 192, Cf. p. 167.
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 196, Cf. p. 166.
[37] See p. 166.

"substance-view", therefore unable to release oneself. My hidden teaching, which is concerned with mind, is weighed down by theory. In the future, people might have confidence in words alone, but not in theory . . ." (*nga'i gsang sngags 'di lta ba chos kyi sku dang bstun la/ spyod pa byang chub kyi phyogs dang bstun/ blta(lta) ba'i phyogs su spyod pa ma shor ba mdzad/ shor na dge med sdig med du song nas chad lta skyes nas phyir gsor mi rung/ spyod pa'i rjes su blta (lta) ba 'breng na/ dngos po'i mtshan mas bcings nas mi 'gyur/ nga'i gsang sngags sems phyogs 'di lhar (lta) ba shas che ste/ ma 'ongs pa tshig gi gdeng ni shes/ lta ba'i gdeng ni ma(mi) rnyed. . . . ./*).[38]

## The rDzogs chen of the dGe lugs pa

The tradition of rDzogs chen of Padmasambhava has been accepted as a genuine teaching by the dGe lugs pa master, the Ist Pan-chen Lama, Blo-bzang chos-kyi rgyal-mtshan (1567–1662) in his famous work *dGe ldan bka' brgyud rin po che'i phyag chen rtsa ba rgyal ba'i gzhung lam*:

> "The Mahāmudrā lHan cig skyes sbyor (of sGam-po-ba),[39] the Mahāmudrā Ga'u ma (of mKhas-grub Khyung-po),[40]
> The Mahāmudrā lNga ldan (of 'Jig-rten mgon-po, 1143–1217),[41]
> The Ro snyoms (of gTsang-pa rGya-ras),[42]
> The Mahāmudrā Yi ge bzhi ba,[43]
> The Zhi byed (of Pha Dam-pa Sangs-rgyas),[44] the gCod yul (of Ma-cig Lab-sgron),[45] the rDzogs chen (of Padmasambhava),[46]
> And the Guide to Madhyamaka theory (of Tsong-kha-pa),[47] etc.

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[38] *BZh* p. 25. An identical passage can be read in *KhG* Ja, f. 87b; Sog-zlog-pa, *Yid kyi mun sel*, 33b, 6; *ShK* OṂ, p. 505.

[39] *Collected Works of sGam-po-pa bSod-nams rin-chen*, Vol. I, pp. 219–24; *YS* f. 11a1; *ZhL* p. 580.

[40] *YS* f. 11a4; *ZhL* p. 580.

[41] *YS* f. 11a6; *ZhL* p. 581; Cf. also Shes-rab 'byung-gnas (1187–1241), *Dam chos dgons pa gcig pa'i khog dbub*, pp. 221–22.

[42] *ZhL* p. 581.

[43] Lit. The "Four Syllables", i.e. the first four syllables of the Sanskrit term *amanasikāra* rendered into Tibetan by *yid la mi byed pa* (Padma dkar-po, *Phyag rgya chen po'i man ngag gi bshad sbyar rgyal ba'i gan mdzod*, f. 17b6). It refers to a certain type of Mahāmudrā teaching generally known as *yid la mi byed pa'i chos skor* (Cf. *ZhL* p. 581). The fundamental work on this teaching is the *Yid la mi byed pa ston pa* (*T* Vol. 68, No. 3094), but certain scholars consider this inauthentic. At any rate, the teaching is considered to have some connection with the theses of Hva-shang Mahāyāna and so is already refuted in the 8th century A.D. by Kamalaśīla in his third *Bhāvanākrama* (*T* Vol. 102, No. 5312, p. 39–2–2).

[44] *ZhL* p. 582.

[45] *Ibid*., p. 582.

[46] *YS* f. 12b3; *ZhL* p. 582. See also Gu-ge Yongs-'dzin, *dGe ldan bka' brgyud rin po che'i bka' srol phyag rgya chen po rnams kyi rtsa 'grel rnams kyi 'grel bshad dngos grub kyi bang mdzod, Collected Works*, New Delhi 1976, Vol. 5, p. 332.

[47] According to Gun-thang bsTan-pa'i sgron-me (*ZhL* p. 597), Tsong-kha-pa gave

Many different names are given,
But if examined by a yogin who is learned in the scriptures that teach truth directly and in reasoning,
And who has experience (gained from practising meditation),
They all would come to the same thought!"
(*lhan cig skyes sbyor ga'u ma/*
*lnga ldan ro snyoms yi ge bzhi/*
*zhi byed gcod yul rdzogs chen dang/*
*dbu ma'i lta khrid la sogs pa/*
*so sor ming 'dodgs mang na yang/*
*nges don lung rigs la mkhas shing/*
*nyams myong can gyi rnal 'byor pas/*
*dpyad na dgongs pa gcig tu 'babs/*).[48]

Writing this work, the Paṇ-chen Lama in fact brought out an already established hidden teaching tradition among the dGe lugs pa known as dBen sa brnyan brgyud handed down from Tsong-kha-pa. Amongst the adherents of this teaching, there are three personages of *siddha* type known as *rdo rje mched gsum*, "the three vajra brothers", *viz.* Chos rdo-rje, dPal rdo-rje and Rin-chen rdo-rje.[49] The Paṇ-chen Lama syncretised the dBen sa rnyan brgyud with all other esoteric teachings of Tibetan Buddhism for which he gives the name of dGe ldan phyag rgya chen po, "the Mahāmudrā of the dGe lugs pa" or simply dGe ldan bka' brgyud. The next great expounder of this doctrine is Gung-thang dKon-mchog bstan-pa'i sgron-me (1762–1823). For these masters, *MTPh* contains the genuine teaching of Padmasambhava and therefore they consider it to be the principal work expounding the doctrine of rDzogs chen which in their view is essentially akin to dGe ldan bka' brgyud.

If the Vth Dalai Lama wrote his celebrated work on rDzogs chen, the *Rig 'dzin zhal lung*,[50] it is quite within the proper dGe lugs pa tradition. However, he has ignored *MTPh.* Instead, his work is linked with a much later tradition. It is intended to elucidate the essential teaching of the cycle of the *Thugs rje chen po 'khor ba dbyings sgrol*, of *gter ma* origin, "rediscovered" by gTer-chen Nyi-zla 'od-zer (1512–1625).[51] The eclectic

instructions on the meditation of Phyag chen (Mahāmudrā) as well as instructions on the Madhyamaka theory (*dbu ma'i lta khrid*) to his disciple Gung-ru rGyal-mtshan bzang-po. The *gSung 'bum* of Tsong-kha-pa does contain a *dBu ma'i lta khrid bsdus pa* (Tohoku 5419), but has no colophon. The title suggests that it was written down by a disciple when the master was giving instruction. The *gSung 'bum* of mKhas-grub-rje dGe-legs dpal-bzang also contains two similar works (Tohoku Nos. 5499, 5508).

[48] *dGe ldan bka' brgyud rin po che'i phyag chen rtsa ba rgyal ba'i gzhung lam*, bKra shis lhun po edition, f. 2a5.

[49] *ZhL* p. 565.

[50] *Thugs rje chen po 'khor ba dbyings sgrol gyi bskyed rdzogs rdzogs pa chen po'i khrid yig rig 'dzin zhal lhung, gSung 'bum nang ma*, Lhasa edition.

[51] *Alias* Legs-ldan rdo-rje, *TTGL* pp. 343–46.

influence on him of the Paṇ-chen Lama led him to approach several rNying ma pa masters, for example, Zur Chos-dbyings rang-grol (1604–1669) and gTer-bdag gling-pa (1646–1714).[52] On the other hand, the Vth Dalai Lama has certain reservation with regard to the doctrine of Mahāmudrā of the bKa' brgyud pa in general and is openly very critical of the innovation of the dGe ldan bka' brgyud by his own teacher: "Surely it would be good if the dGe lugs pa kept themselves to themselves. What is the good of pushing in among the bKa' brgyud pa! (*dge lugs dge lugs byas pa rang bzang mod/ bka' brgyud pa'i khrod du 'tshang nas ci bya/*).[53]

*MTPh* has, indeed, certain traits that are harmonious with the doctrinal views of the sNgags gsar ma so that even the critic of rDzogs chen, dPal-mang dKon-mchog rgyal-mtshan does not hesitate to quote it as an authentic source. In his *Grub mtha'i dris lan phyogs lhung mun sel snang ba*,[54] he cites the following passages from *MTPh*:

> *byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa la zhugs pa rnams kyi lta ba ni/ kun nas nyon mongs pa dang rnam par byang ba'i chos thams cad don dam par ni rang bzhin med pa yin la/ kun rdzob tu ni sgyu ma tsam du mtshan nyid ma 'dres par yod do/*

Also:

> *de la rdzogs pa chen po ni bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs rdzogs pas/ 'bras bu chos lhun gyis grub pa'i don no/*

The interpretation of the "Two Truths" in the first passage with regard to the phenomenal and noumenal aspects of existence fits well with that of the dGe lugs pa's stand. The definition of the term *rdzogs chen* given in second passage differs completely from that of other traditions of the rNying ma pa, but seems acceptable for those who follow the sNgags gsar ma.

## The Nine Vehicles (theg pa dgu)

*MTPh* is composed within the framework of the nine categories of Buddhist approach to Enlightenment although the actual expression *theg pa dgu* has not been used. The last three of the nine (Diagram IV) have the word *tshul* (*naya, vidhi, yukti*) instead of *theg pa* (*yāna*) which suggests that they are in fact not considered to be independent in approach as implied by the term *theg pa*. In the rNying ma pa tradition each of the nine

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[52] Lo-chen Dharmaśrī (1654–1717), *rJe btsun bla ma dam pa gter chen chos kyi rgyal po'i rang gi rtogs pa brjod pa yon tan mtha' yas rnam par bkod pa'i rol mo*, pp. 310–12. Also *Rig 'dzin zhal lung*, f. 51a1.

[53] *ZhL* p. 577; Cf. also *GCh* Vol. 2, pp. 310–12.

[54] P. 203–4.

constitutes an independent means to Enlightenment and one is higher than the other in their grade and better in their methods in accordance with the level of intelligence of the adepts. Atiyoga or rDzogs chen is therefore the highest and for the most intelligent adepts. This stand of the rNying ma pa has provoked criticism from other sects who generally hold that in Buddhism there are only three categories of *theg pa*. To prove such an argument a passage is often quoted from a text with an ambiguous title, the *rDo rje snying 'grel*.[55]

The first critic of the system of the *theg pa dgu* seems to have been Sa-paṇ Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan. In his *DR*, he writes:

> "According to those who follow the "Early translation of the tantras", Yoga, Mahāyoga, Anuyoga and Atiyoga,
> Are said to be different grades of vehicles. . . . .,
> But according to those who follow the "Later translation of the tantras" these are grades of *samādhi* and not grades of groups of tantras (i.e. *theg pa*)".
> (*gsang sngags snga 'gyur pa rnams ni/*
> *rnal 'byor rnal 'byor chen po dang/*
> *rjes su rnal 'byor shin tu ni/*
> *rnal 'byor zhes bya rnam pa bzhi/*
> *theg pa rim pa yin zhes zer/* . . . .
> *gsang sngags phyi 'gyur ba rnams ni/* . . . .
> *'di dag ting 'dzin rim yin gyi/*
> *rgyud sde'i rim par mi bzhed do/*).[56]

Sa-paṇ therefore maintains that the four groups of these rNying ma pa tantras cannot be considered to profess four different kinds of *theg pa* like those of the sNgags gsar ma: Kriyā, Caryā, Yoga and Mahāyoga. Sa-paṇ pursues his argument in the following lines:

> "The theory of Atiyoga is Gnosis,
> Not a means.
> To make a subject—that cannot be expressed in words—an object of discussion,
> Is not a thought of the learned"
> (*A ti yo ga'i lta ba ni/*
> *ye shes yin gyi theg pa min/*
> *brjod bral brjod byar byas pa ni/*
> *mkhas pa'i dgongs pa min zhes bya/*)[57]

What Sa-paṇ in fact here says is that Atiyoga itself is already the En-

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[55] It is in fact the *Kye'i rdo rje bsdus pa'i don rgya cher 'grel ba* by rDo-rje snying-po (*T* Vol. 53, No. 2310, p. 3–5–3): *nyan thos pa dang rang rgyal 'dir/ theg pa chen po gsum pa ste/ sangs rgyas pa yi bzhi ba dang/ lnga pa thub pa'i dgongs pa min/* Cf. also 'Jam-dbyangs bzhad-pa, *Grub mtha'i rnam par bzhag pa 'khrul spong gdong lnga'i sgra dbyangs kun mkhyen lam bzang gsal ba'i rin chen sgron me*, Ga, f. 1a.

[56] P. 310–1–6.

[57] *Ibid.*, p. 311–4–5.

lightenment, i.e. Result and therefore not a means (*theg pa*) for attaining Enlightenment. He evidently holds the view that Atiyoga or rDzogs chen is the final stage arrived at through practising the meditation of *saṃpannakrama* (*rdzogs rim*). Indeed, it is *rang byung ye shes* to which Sa-paṇ refers to when he says *ye shes yin gyi theg pa min/* and this he has clarified in yet another line:

> "The self-awareness (*svasaṃvedana*) produced from *saṃpannakrama*"
> (. . . *rdzogs rim gyi/ rang byung ye shes* . . ./).[58]

For the rNying ma pa themselves, *rang byung ye shes* is also a synonym for rDzogs chen or Atiyoga.[59] Sa-paṇ's argument is therefore in agreement with the theory of *bskyed rdzogs gsum* of the rNying ma pa. His contention is not simply philosophical pedantry as it might seem. It has the echo of a distant tradition in the past where Atiyoga was not considered to be a *theg pa*. This is clear from the fact that the Tun-huang document *PT* 489 presents Atiyoga as being only one kind of yoga (Diag. I) and not as a *theg pa*. It must be noted that *YTh* (Diag. II), *MTPh* (Diag. IV), and *MTG* (Diag. V) have refrained from using the term *theg pa* for the last three of the *theg pa dgu*.

Nevertheless, the *theg pa dgu* is a very old Tibetan classification of different categories of Buddhist teachings in Tibet. Such classification is unknown in any Indian work on Buddhism. On the other hand, the Bonpo also have a similar system of classification of their own religious teachings in which rDzogs chen occupies the same position (Diag. VII).

The Tun-huang document *PT* 489 which does not accord with other sources in its classification has special peculiarities. Its first *theg pa* known as *mi'i theg pa*, "the vehicle of man" and the second, *lha'i theg pa*, "the vehicle of the gods" have no parallels in other versions of the *theg pa dgu* of the rNying ma pa tradition, but occur in a Bonpo work of the fourteenth century, the *Theg pa rim pa mngon du bshad pa'i mdo rgyud*. In this text, they are combined together as one *theg pa: lha mi'i gzhan rten gyi theg pa*, "the vehicle of man and gods that relies on others" (Diag. VII/B). The *theg pa dgu* contained in this Bonpo work is known as *dBus gter theg pa dgu*, "the Nine vehicles of the Central Treasury" in Bonpo tradition[60] and is entirely different from the system of the *lho gter theg pa dgu*, "the Nine vehicles of the Southern Treasury" which is now well known due to the studies of Professor Snellgrove (Diag. VII/A).[61]

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[58] *Ibid.*, p. 310–1–6.
[59] Cf. p. 131.
[60] This work is a *gter ma* origin. For further details, see Karmay 1977, No. 74. However, Rong-zom does speak of five *theg pa* in which the *lha mi'i theg pa* is the first, *KC* f. 24, Cf. also *NgD* p. 306.
[61] *The Nine Ways of Bon*, 1967; Karmay 1972, p. 191.

The other peculiarity of the *theg pa dgu* in *PT* 489 is the subdivision of the last three categories each into four elements. Such classifications are also unknown in other Buddhist works. The difference in structure of the classification of the system suggests that the version of *PT* 489 is the earliest one. *MTPh* and *YTh* both somewhat hesitate to treat the last three of the nine as a definitive *theg pa*. The composition of both *MTPh* and *YTh* probably belongs to the late ninth or early tenth centuries as *PT* 489. However, *TRSh* also known as *lTa ba'i rim pa'i man ngag* or *sNang ba bcu bdun* and attributed to the famous Lo-tsā-ba sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs who was active late eighth and early ninth centuries A.D.—does not use the expression *theg pa dgu*, but it is also composed within the framework of the nine categories. Moreover, it does not hesitate to attach the term *theg pa* to each of the last three of the nine, e.g. *Atiyoga'i theg pa* (Diag. III). Certain doubts are expressed by Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub as to whether its author was the Lo-tsā-ba as the tradition maintains, but no remark is made with regard to its antiquity and, he at any rate seems to be content to let it remain in the *bsTan 'gyur*.[62]

However, the composition of *YTh* and *TRSh* certainly goes back beyond the eleventh century A.D., for neither of them has mentioned the Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka (dBu ma thai 'gyur ba), as this school was not yet known in Tibet before the eleventh century. Only two Madhyamaka schools were known to the early Tibetan authors as *dbu ma rnam gnyis*, "the Two Madhyamaka schools". In this regard, the *lTa ba'i khyad par* ascribed to the Lo-tsā-ba Zhang Ye-shes-sde (late eighth century A.D.) provides us with very good information: "Two slightly different schools of the system of the Madhyamaka-śastra came into existence. The one that was established by Ācārya Bhāvaviveka (c. sixth century A.D.) is called mDo sde spyod pa'i dbu ma and the one established by Ācārya Śāntarakṣita (eighth century A.D.) is called rNal 'byor spyod pa'i dbu ma" (*dbu ma'i bstan bcos lugs cung zad mi mthun pa gnyis byung bas/ a tsa rya 'ba' phyas mdzad pa la ni/ mdo sde spyod pa'i dbu ma zhes btags/ a tsa rya shan ta rag shi tas mdzad pa pa la ni/ mal 'byor spyod pa'i dbu ma zhes btags so/*).[63] Elsewhere these two schools are also known as *phyi'i dbu ma* and *nang gi rnal 'byor dbu ma*. We shall have something to say concerning these below. It was only the second half of the eleventh century that saw the translations of the works of Candrakīrti (seventh century A.D.), especially *Madhyamakā-*

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[62] *DS* p. 1045: *phyi ma 'di dpyad/*—"This last one (i.e. the work in question) must be taken with circumspection".

[63] *PT* 814 (D.S. Ruegg, "Autour du *lTa ba'i khyad par* de Ye ses sde", *JA* Tome CCLXIX, 1981, p. 217). Another fragment of the same text, *PT* 820 whose existence does not seem to have been noticed.

*vatāra-kārikā* translated by Pa-tshab Nyi-ma-grags (b. 1055). Hence the Prāsaṅgika school could not be known to the Tibetan authors of *YTh* and *TRSh*.

Rong-zom Paṇḍita Chos-kyi bzang-po also mentions only the two schools although he lived in a period contemporary to Pa-tshab Lo-tsā-ba.[64]

The Tun-huang document *PT* 842 also gives only two different schools of Madhyamaka, but describes them in somewhat different terms: Phyi'i dbu ma or Phyi rol ba'i dbu ma, "the Outer Madhyamaka"; Nang gi rnal 'byor gyi dbu ma, "the Madhyamaka of the Inner Yoga". While the "outer" corresponds to mDo sde spyod pa'i dbu ma, the "Inner One" to rNal 'byor spyod pa'i dbu ma which we have noted. This Tun-huang manuscript bears the title, *Sang rgyas pa'i theg pa che chung gsum dang/ mu stegs la stsogs pa'i lta ba mdor bsdus te khyad par du phye ba*,[65] but has no colophon. This title suggests that it is this work which may have been composed by Ye-shes-sde and not *T* no. 5847, for the title of the latter does not contain the expression *lTa ba'i khyad pa*, but *lTa ba'i bye brag*. Another *lTa ba'i bye brag* is mentioned in *TD*, but ascribed to Slob-dpon Nyi-ma'i-'od.[66] Whatever the case maybe, *PT* 842 contains analysis of "different views" (*lta ba'i khyad pa*), i.e. doctrinal views of non-Buddhists and Buddhists whereas *T* No. 5847 gives only a summary and definitions of exclusively Buddhist doctrines. However, the names such as Chags-med for Thogs-med (Asariga), Sa'i rtsa-lag for dByig-gnyen (Vasubandhu) and words like *rnam par smra ba* for Bye brag tu smra ba (Vaibhāsika) and *rdzogs longs spyod pa'i sku* for *longs psyod rdzogs pa'i sku* (*saṃbhogakāya*) definitely prove that the composition of *PT* 842 from before the revision of the Tibetan language and the translations of Buddhist texts that were already made.

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[64] *lTa ba'i brjed byang* (No. V), pp. 208–10, 225, 227; *Grub mtha'i brjed byang* (No. VII), pp. 341–43 (*Selected Writings of Rong-zom Chos-kyi-bzang-po, sManrtsis shesrig spendzod*, Vol. 73, Leh 1974).

[65] This is probably identical to *IOL* 607.

[66] *TD* 679 (Lalou 1953). However, the name Nyi-ma'i-'od remains unidentified. The title *slob dpon* is usually given to Indian teachers, but also to some Tibetan masters, e.g. Slob-dpon dPal-dbyangs (see p. 67). There is a certain confusion concerning the title and to some extent concerning authorship of *T* Vol. 145, No. 5847. A *lTa ba'i shan 'byed* of Ye-shes-sde is known to Paṇ-chen Śākya mchog-ldan who describes it as the first Tibetan treatise (*bod kyi mkhan pos mdzad pa'i bstan bcos thog ma*) in his *Chos kyi 'khor lo bskor ba'i rnam bzhag ji ltar grub pa'i yi ge gzu bor gnas pa'i mdzangs pa dga' byed* (*Collected Works*, Vol. 16, p. 463), but in his *dBu ma'i byung tshul rnam par bshad pa'i gtam yid bzhin lhun po* (Vol. 4, p. 222) he cites a *lTa ba'i brjed byang* of Ye-shes-sde in connection with the two Madhyamaka schools. On the other hand, Tsong-kha-pa (*Drang nges legs bshad snying po, T* Vol. 153, No. 6142, p. 187–5–1) and 'Jam-dbyangs bzhad-pa (*Grub mtha' chen mo*, Ca, f. 11a2,5) prefer not to mention any title of the Ye-shes-sde work in question. Both refer to him as *slob dpon*. The passages quoted in *Grub mtha' chen mo* are certainly identical to those of *T* No. 5847, but there is a considerable change in the text.

The revision was decreed (*bkas bcad*) by King Khri lDe-srong-btsan in 814 A.D. This Tun-huang document is important for the study of the evolution of Tibetan translation from Sanskrit in the eighth century A.D.[67]

## The peculiarities of MTPh

While Buddhist and non-Buddhist doctrines are treated more or less in conformity with the general Buddhist tradition, there are certain terms and notions which stand out prominently. These may be considered as characteristic marks of rDzogs chen thought. A strong emphasis is laid on the theory of Primeval Purity (*ka dag*) and the theory of "all entities of existence being enlightened from the beginning" (*chos thams cad ye nas sangs rgyas pa*). They are in themselves a well developed theme in *SNy*. All these notions are in opposition to the general Buddhist doctrine of the "beginninglessness of *saṃsāra*" (*'khor ba thog ma med pa*) and of "its being impure from the non-beginning". The text also stresses the importance of the faith through which the adept is to gain his understanding of the doctrine. Only through faith can one understand the doctrine of "all the entities of existence that have always been in the nature of Enlightenment" (*chos thams cad ye nas sangs rgyas pa*). The author seems to have felt the need to defend this doctrine. He writes that this doctrine is "not at all contradictory to the scriptures" which statement suggests that there were criticisms directed against this theory.

Above all, the text is held to be a precept (*man ngag*) on rDzogs chen meditation and thus it tries to minimise the importance of the ritualistic practices of the tantras. However, at the same time, the author has not been able to refrain from giving a detailed but extremely clumsy description of the *maṇḍala* of *SNy*. Being an accessory, it was perhaps necessary to give a short account of it, but in doing so the author has tried to bring what could be described as a *maṇḍala* of the Mahāyoga tantra up to the level of the rDzogs chen doctrine. The resulting obscurity is enormous and here I do not pretend to have solved all the inherent textual and philosophical problems in presenting a translation of this work. The question of identifying the divinities and other aspects of the *maṇḍala* have therefore not been studied as these would require the study of the whole *Guhyagarbha* tantra itself which is obviously outside the scope of the present intended research.

*MTPh* as seen is the fundamental text of one of the two rDzogs chen traditions. Its ascription to Padmasambhava dates back to at least the

[67] Cf. Stein 1983, p. 1 et seq.

tenth century A.D., but the actual author remains unknown. The question of authorship is, generally speaking, not so important in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition as long as the work meets certain conditions. Being the principal work dealing with the final stage of the process of the *rdzogs rim* meditation expounded in *SNy*,[68] it is the original source that gave birth to what is known as the doctrine of rDzogs chen, a syncretic teaching mainly drawn from *SNy* and tinged with thoughts originating in Sems sde. The application of the term rDzogs chen to this syncretism goes back at the earliest to the ninth century A.D.

## Translation of MTPh

The Rosary of Views, being the precept.

(p. 2) Recollective notes concerning the brief analysis of views and ways. Homage to Bhagavān Mañjuśrīkumāra and Vajradharma!
A) In the world sentient beings hold countless perverse views.
(I) The Phyal ba.[69]
(II) The rGyang 'phen pa.[70]
(III) The Mur thug pa.[71]
(IV) The Mu stegs pa.[72]

[68] Pp. 1–4–4, 1–5–5.

[69] This simply designates ordinary living beings. *MTG* (p. 24) explains: "Since their imagination and intelligence are weak they lack any particular view. . . . most of the six kinds of living beings are in this category . . ." The term *phyal ba* is in fact another form of *phal ba* as in *'jig rten phal ba*, Cf. Rong-zom, *lTa ba'i brjed byang chen mo*, p. 188. A similar definition is also given by Mi-pham (*NB* p. 421): *grub mtha' dang theg pa med pas sam/ don la zhe 'dod kyi gtad so med pas phyal ba. . . ./*

[70] The expression *'jig rten rgyang 'phen* (also *phan*) *pa* according to *MTG* (p. 25) came out of the meaning of the Sanskrit term *lokāyati* (*'jig rten tsam*). Here it refers to the Nihilists (*chad smra ba, ucchedavāda*) who follow lHa phur-pa (*Grub mtha' mdzod*, f. 134). But the expression itself has no ready explanation. *MTG* (p. 25) states that the expression has no Sanskrit origin. It is a Tibetan way of putting the meaning of *lokāyata* (*bod kyi lugs su don de dang mthun pa'i ming gdags par bya na . . ./*). In later works various explanations are tried, e.g. dBus-pa Blo-gsal sangs-rgyas-'bum (c. 14th century A.D.) *Grub pa'i mtha'i rnam par bshad pa'i mdzod* (Mimaki 1982, f. 6b, 3–5); Cf. also *TG* f. 124.

[71] The definition of this is given as: "it means that one reaches the end, but has not been beyond it" (*MTG* p. 27: *mtha' zad cing pha rol tu ma phyin pa'i ming ste/*). It therefore has the same meaning as *mur thug* (*maryada*, "boundary", "limit", "end", *Mvy* 5316). Elsewhere it occurs as *mur rtug* (*PT* 218) and *mur 'dug* (*IOL* 710). As a "school" it is not readily identifiable with any of the schools usually given in *grub mtha'* works. Moreover, here its view does not differ much from that of the *Rgyang 'phen pa*. In fact, the term *mur 'dug* occurs in conjunction with *mu stegs* in the texts of the Ch'an in the sense of another category of the *mu stegs pa*, see Stein 1983, p. 187.

[72] Sanskrit: *tīrthika*. It usually covers all non-Buddhist schools in India, especially dBang phyug pa (Śaiva). The four categories given here are a quite different classification

(I) The Phyal ba: those who do not know that all the elements of existence are in the chain of cause and effect. They are ignorant.

(II) The rGyang 'phen pa: those who do not know that life has an antecedent and a future. They depend on the "secret words of this world"[73] to acquire wealth and power for only this life time.

(III) The Mur thug: those who take the view that all elements of existence are devoid of cause and effect. In their view, all elements of existence are accidentally produced in one life time.

(IV) The Mu stegs pa: those who take the view that there is a (p. 3) permanent self operating as the principle in all elements of existence. (There are three categories) here:

(i) The view that existence is without cause, but has effect.[74]

(ii) The view that the concept of existence as cause and effect is perverse.[75]

(iii) The view that existence is preceded by a cause, but devoid of effect.[76] All these views are due to ignorance.

B) As to the path that transcends the world, there are two categories:

(a) The analytic path.

(b) The Vajrayāna.

(a) i. Śrāvakayāna.
ii. Pratyekabuddhayāna.
iii. Bodhisattvayāna.

i. According to the view of the one who has entered the path of the Śrāvaka, the Tīrthika's stand that all elements of existence are either totally devoid of self from the beginning or are endowed with a permanent self

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from the ones usually found in Tibetan Buddhist works on *grub mtha'*. *Mu stegs* in this category stands only for the Eternalist (*śāśvatavāda*).

[73] The explanation of *'jig rten gyi gsang tshig* is given as: "secret mantras that are not qualified to serve as the means of attaining Enlightenment. They are taught by those who are concerned only with mundane affairs" (*MTG* p. 30: *rnam par grol ba'i sgor ma gyur pa'i gsang sngags ste/ 'jig rten pas bshad pa/ 'jig rten gyi bya ba bsgrub pa rnams so/*).

[74] "They hold that visible substance is there from the beginning. No cause has ever preceded it" (*snang ba'i dngos po la ni ye nas grub pa yin la/ de bskyed pa'i gzhan ni myed par lta bas/ MTG* p. 32). *MTG* (p. 31) further explains that these are the ones who hold that *rang bzhin* (*prakṛti*) is cause of all existence. They are therefore the Grangs can pa (Sāṃkhya).

[75] *MTG* p. 33: "they hold that by committing misdeeds, one earns the happiness of superior beings" (*mi dge ba'i las kyis/ mtho ris kyi bde ba grub par 'dod pas/ rgyu 'bras long par lta ba . . ./*). They are further identified as being those who view dBang-phyug (Śiva) as the cause of all existence (*MTG* p. 31). Hence it refers to the dBang phyug pa.

[76] *MTG* (pp. 31, 34) states that this is the school which holds the view that "soul" or "doer" (*byed pa po*) is the cause of all existence and the size of it varies in accordance with the body which contains it. What therefore seems to be referred to is the rGyal ba pa (Jaina), Cf. p. 188, n. 68.

is like a rope taken as if it were a snake. The *skandha, dhātu*, (p. 4) and *āyatana*, etc., the atoms of the four elements, and consciousness are seen as having true existence. Through graded contemplation on the Four Noble Truths, the four kinds of Result are achieved.

ii. The view of the one who has taken up the path of the Pratyekabuddha is as follows: his view is similar to that of the Śrāvaka concerning the Tīrthika's view, but differs in understanding partially the non-existence of the "self", i.e. the non-substantiality of the *rūpaskandha*, for example. When he achieves his goal, he does not rely on his masters like the Śrāvakas. With the strength of his previous exercises, he comes to a realisation of the meaning of the profound *dharmatā* through (the meditation on) the twelve elements of causality. Thus he attains the goal for himself.

iii. The view of those who have entered the path of the Bodhisattva is: all elements of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* in reality have no true existence (p. 5). It is only in terms of conventional truth that each entity exists, its own identity being so much an illusion. Through practising the ten *pāramitā*, a Bodhisattva traverses the ten spiritual stages one by one and then finally attains Enlightenment.

b) The Vajrayāna is of threefold:
   I. The Kriyā tantra.
   II. The Ubhayā tantra.[77]
   III. The Yoga tantra.

I. The view of those who have entered the path of the Kriyā tantra: Ultimately there is neither origination nor cessation (of the divinities), but in terms of conventional truth, one contemplates on the physical representation of the divinities, such as their images and their attributes.[78] One recites their mantras and observes hygiene, periodic sessions (of contemplation) according to (the appropriate) days and dates. Above all, one endeavours to achieve one's goal mainly through the use of ritual items and other requisites.[79]

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[77] There is no comment on this particular *theg pa* in *MTG* (p. 75). It seems a passage is missing in the copy I use. The Sanskrit equivalent for this is given as *upāyatantra* in a number of works. However, Zhe-chen Padma rnam-rgyal (early 20th cent.) corrects it to *ubhayā (gnyis ka), sNga 'gyur theg dgu'i tshogs bshad mdor bsdus nor bu'i tambra* (n.d), f. 35. It therefore fits with the explanation given in *YTh* (p. 89–2–4): "As for the thesis of the *gnyis ka rgyud*, because its practice follows those of the Kriyā tantra and its theories converge with those of the Yoga tantra, it is named thus" (*gnyis ka rgyud kyi 'dod pa ni/ spyod pa bya ba'i rjes 'thun* (*mthun*) *par/ lta bas rnal 'byor rjes 'jug phyir/*) This *theg pa* is also known as *ma ning theg pa, Theg mchog mdzod*, Vol. E. f. 66b,5.

[78] I have assumed *thugs mtshan* to be an abridged form of *thugs phyag mtshan* like in the contexts of *lha'i sku sgyu ma, gsung yig 'bru* and *thugs phyag mtshan* (*Grub mtha' mdzod*, f. 157b,2). In our text of *MTPh* the order is less clear. There is mention of *sku'i gzugs brnyan* and *bzlas brjod* although the latter is not preceded by *gsung*.

[79] For an exposition on the Kriyā tantras and their identification, see *Grub mtha' mdzod*, f. 158a,4.

II. The view of those who have entered the path of Ubhayā tantra: (Their view on the two truths is similar to that of the Kriyā tantra.) To accomplish their goal they take up the practice of the *samādhi* which comprises four divisions[80] and rely on ritual items and other requisites.[81]

III. (p. 6) The view of those who have entered the path of the Yoga tantra is twofold:

i. *Thub pa rgyud kyi theg pa*, the Exoteric Yoga.[82]

ii. *Thabs rgyud kyi theg pa*, the Esoteric Yoga.

i. The view of those who have entered the path of the Exoteric Yoga: they do not consider that the external ritual items are indispensable, and hold that the divinities and goddesses are ultimately devoid of any origination and cessation. Accordingly they meditate on the bodies of the divinities through the totally purified concentration endowed with the four kinds of *mudrā*.[83] Through the practice of the yoga, they endeavour to achieve their goal.

ii. The view of those who have entered the path of the Esoteric Yoga is of threefold:

I. The mode of development.[84]

II. The mode of achievement.[85]

III. The mode of the Great Perfection.

I. As for the mode of development, the *sādhaka* develops the three kinds of *samādhi*[86] one by one and gradually creates the *maṇḍala* mentally. Through this meditation, they achieve their goal.

II. As for the mode of achievement, the *sādhaka* considers that ultimately

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[80] *MTG* p. 83: 1. *bDag gi de kho na nyid* (*sādhaka*),
2. *lHa'i de bho na nyid* (tutelary deity),
3. *Yig 'bru'i de kho na nyid* (mantra),
4. *bZlas brjod de kho na nyid* (recitation of mantras).

[81] For further details on Ubhayā tantras and their identification, see *Grub mtha' mdzod*, f. 158b,4.

[82] Although this *theg pa* here appears as a subdivision of the Yoga tantra (i.e. VIth *theg pa*), it is in fact the Yoga tantra itself as shown in *YTh* (Diag. II). However, in later works, Kriyā, Ubhayā and Yoga tantras are all classified as belonging to *phyi thub pa rgyud kyi theg pa*, *Grub mtha' mdzod*, f. 157a2; see also Diag. V. The explanation given of the phrase *phyi thub pa* is: "Since they emphasize hygiene and other activities, their teachings are similar to those of the three minor *theg pa* (i.e. the first three of the nine) of the *nirmāṇakāya* (i.e. Śākyamuni)" (*gtsang sbra dang sgo gsum gyi bya byed gtsor ston pas sprul ba'i sku'i theg pa chung ngu gsum dang chos mthun pa'i phyir ro/*). In the rNying ma pa tradition, certain tantric teachings are classified as the doctrine of the *sambhogakāya* (*longs sku'i bstan pa*), whereas rDzogs chen is that of *dharmakāya* (*chos sku'i bstan pa*), *KG* f. 37.

[83] On the four kinds of *mudrā*, see Rong-zom, *rGyud spyi'i dngos po gsal bar byed pa'i yi ge*, *Rong zom bka' 'bum*, f. 522; *KC* f. 83.

[84] This generally corresponds to *utpannakrama* in the sNgags gsar ma.

[85] This mostly corresponds to *saṃpannakrama* in the sNgags gsar ma. For further details, see *MTG*, p. 89.

[86] For these see *MTG*, p. 88.

the divinities and (p. 7) goddesses are devoid of origination and cessation and the conceptual definition of non-thought remains fixed at the centre of *dharmadhātu*, but conventionally he, nevertheless, contemplates the body of divinities equally but with their separate identities.

III. As for the mode of the Great Perfection, the adept understands that that which exists in this world and that which transcends it have no differentiation and so he holds that from the very beginning they have always been present as the *maṇḍala* of body, speech and mind. The *Tantra* says:

> As for the members of the *vajraskandha*,
> They are known as the five Buddhas,
> Senses and consciousness and others,
> Present as the *maṇḍala* of Bodhisattvas.
> Earth being Locānā, water Mamākī,
> Fire being Pāṇḍaravāsinī, wind Tārā.
> Space being Dhātvīśvarī,
> The three worlds are pure from the very beginning.[87]

All the elements of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are without beginning, but have capacity for illusory action since they have always been present as the five Buddhas and their consorts. (p. 8) All entities of existence are intrinsically in the nature of *nirvāṇa*. The five great elements are present as the five mothers; the five *skandha*, the Buddhas of the five families; the four kinds of *vijñāna*, the four Bodhisattvas; the four objects, the four beautiful goddesses; the four *indriya*, the Bodhisattvas; the four seasons, the four goddesses of offering.

The organ of the male, consciousness and its object produce *bodhicitta*[88] which is present as the four wrathful gods. The four views of eternalism and nihilism are present as the four wrathful goddesses. The mind (*manojñāna*), i.e. *bodhicitta* is present as the (active) Kun-tu bzang-po. The object of mind, the entities, conditioned and unconditioned are present as the passive Kun-tu bzang-mo.[89]

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[87] *SNy* p. 1–3–8.

[88] Several interpretations of the meaning of *bodhicitta* in the present context are given in *MTG* (p. 97). According to the system of Khams (*Khams lugs*), it is the "sphere of mind" (*yid kyi khams*) which is produced by the consciousness of the body (*lus kyi rnam par shes pa'i rjes su kyes pa*). But according to the system of dBus (*dBus lugs*), it is simply the "feeling perceived by the faculty of the body" (*lus kyi(s) 'dus te reg pa'i rkyen gyis tshor ba la bya*). However, *MTG*'s own understanding of it is the experience of "bliss" attained from the oneness of the union of *upāya* and *prajñā* (*thabs dang shes rab gnyis su myed par sbyor ba'i bde ba myong ba'i chub kyi sems*). Cf. note 89.

[89] The use of the terms *byed pa po* and *bya ba mo* is a semantic puzzle in the tantras, especially in the Mahāyoga tantras of the rNying ma pa tradition. In chapter II of *SNy* (p. 1–4–2) *dharmakāya* in order to pronounce the tantra comes forth as Kun-tu bzang-po in the form of *saṃbhogakāya* and then enters into union with his consort Kun-tu bzang-mo. He is the embodiment of the mind of all Buddhas characterised as the creator (*byed pa po*),

As all these have already been in the nature of Enlightenment, nothing more is to be achieved by following a path. Thus, the ten directions, the three periods, the three worlds, etc. all the elements of existence condi-

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hence the one who is active whereas his feminine partner is the one who is passive (*bya ba mo*). The male partner is further conceived as the mind (*yid*) which perceives (*yul can*) and the feminine partner as the object (*chos*), that which is perceived (*yul*).

In his *NYP* (f. 33b), Klong-chen rab-'byams explains the problem in the following ways: "The teacher, the *Yab* with his partner appears in the form of *saṃbhogakāya*. His mind is then called the "Awareness that is born from within oneself". When it perceives an object, it is called the Yab Kun-tu bzang-po and its object, the passive Yum Kun-tu bzang-mo" (*chos sku'i ston pa yab yum nyid longs skur snang ba'i thugs rang byung gi ye shes bya ba'i (bas) yul gtan la 'bebs pa na/ 'bebs byed rig pa ni/ yid rdo rje kun tu bzang po yab tu brjod la/ yul shes bya ba ni bya ba mo kun tu bzang mo ste yum du btags so/*). The term *byed pa po* in this commentary seems to have been missed out or avoided, but is clearly mentioned in *KC* (f. 193). A similar passage in a Tun-huang manuscript (*IOL* 437) which is no doubt related to Mahāyoga tantras, presents the problem a little more directly. "The external object—being that which is perceived—is the passive Kun-tu bzang-mo who has neither top nor bottom, nor middle nor end. The internal subject, that which perceives, is the mind, the active Kun-tu bzang-po who is the *Yab*. The thought of the couple is *bodhicitta*" (*phyi'i yul chos bya ba mo kun tu bzang mo mkha' lding (kha gting) dbus mtha' med pa la bya/ nang gyi (gi) yul rtogs(rtog) pas tshus(tshur) bcad pa yid yid (sic) byed (pa po) kun tu bzang po la bya ste yab/ yab yum rnams gnyis kyi dgongs pa byang chub kyi sems/*).

Despite the obscurity of the above passages, we, nevertheless, can establish the following dichotomic pattern:

subject: *byed pa po, yid, yul can,* Kun-tu bzang po, *yab*.
object: *bya ba mo, chos, yul,* Kun-tu bzang mo, *yum*.

A similar passage also occurs in a Bonpo work on rDzogs chen, but there the terms *byed pa po* and *bya ba mo* are used in slightly different ways. The *Sems lung gab pa dgu bskor gyi 'grel ba rgya cher bshad pa* (Karmay 1977, No. 53), f. 2b: "The universal Grand Father of all beings comes out from the compassionate blessing of Kun-tu bzang-mo, the creator of object (*bon nyid*) and Kun-tu bzang-po, the creator of perception (*sems nyid*). . . . ." (*sems can thams cad kyi spyi mes bya ba ni/ bon nyid bya ba byed pa mo kun tu bzang mo dang sems nyid bya ba byed pa po kun tu bzang po gnyis kyi thugs rje byin gyis brlabs pa las/*).

However, such a structure is not always unanimously agreed on. In the *Rin po che rgyas pa chen po'i rgyud* (Kaneko 49, f. 176), it is stated on the contrary that the perception is Kun-tu bzang-mo and the object of perception is Kun-tu bzang-po (*gsal ba'i rnam par shes pa kun tu bzang mo ste/ de'i yul du snang ba kun tu bzang po nyid/*). Cf. also *lTa ba klong yangs*, Kaneko 65, f. 307.

Yet another passage with the same terms occurs in the *gZer mig* of the Bonpo (Vol. I, f. 26b) where however the Bonpos use them according to their theory of procreation: "The ray shining from the light is the thought emanating from the mind. This is what is known as the mind being the passive Kun-tu bzang-mo; the thought, the active is Kun-tu bzang-po" (*'od las zer 'phros de sems las yid sprul ba lags so/ sems bya ba po (mo) kun tu bzang po (mo) dang/ yid byed pa po kun tu bzang mo (po) zhes pa de la bya/*). The conception of *yid* as opposed to *sems* is derived from the Bonpo system in which consciousness is made up of three entities, *bla, yid* and *sems*, Cf. Snellgrove 1967, pp. 116, 120, 160. The same terms are also used in the descriptions of the beginning of the world in astrological works, e.g. sDe-srid Sangs-rgyas rgya-mtsho, *Phug lugs rtsis kyi legs bshad mkhas pa'i mgul rgyan vaiḍūrya dkar po'i do shal dpyad ldan snying nor*, Zhol edition, f. 130b2: *'di la yid byed gser gyi ni/rus sbal nam mkha'i mtha' mnyam pa/ thabs kyi rang bzhin kha bub gnas/ chos bya dngul gyi rus sbal ni/ sa gzhi'i gtos mnyan shes rab kyi/ . . .*).

tioned and unconditioned are nothing but one's own mind (p. 9). So it is said:[90]

The understanding of one's own mind clearly,
It is Enlightenment!
It is the three worlds!
It is the great elements!

And also:[91]

All the elements of existence dwell in the mind,
The mind dwells in space,
Space dwells in no where!

Furthermore:

All existence is void by nature,
It is primordially pure from the very beginning,
It is totally luminescent,
It abides in the nirvāṇic state,
It is manifestly enlightened.

Such is the Great Perfection!

As for the mode of the Great Perfection, one comes to conviction by means of the four ways of understanding. The definition of the expression *rdzogs pa chen po'i tshul* is the fulfilment of the two kinds of accumulation of merit, *viz.* the merit of virtuous work and that of spiritual exercises and finally acquiring the goal of spontaneity. (p. 10) As for the four ways of understanding, they are:

1. The understanding of all existence as having only one cause.
2. The understanding of it through the mode of syllables.
3. The understanding of it through blessing.
4. The understanding of it directly.

As for the first, all existence in terms of the absolute has neither origination nor has any separate entities, but conventionally its apparitional character—which has no origination and therefore involves no individual entities—is like the moon reflected in different waters, hence it has capacity for causality. This apparition itself is devoid of true nature and has no origination (yet it has appearance). So in terms of both absolute and conventional truth one entity cannot be separated from another, whence derives understanding of the one cause.

As for the second, existence has no origination and, being in the nature

[90] *MTG* (p. 981) has identified this work as *Khams gsum rnam par rgyal ba'i rtog pa*, but for the present it remains unknown.

[91] According to *MTG* (p. 98) this quotation is from a *gSang ba 'dus pa*. It is certainly not the *Guhyasamāja* although the latter is to be found in *NyG* (Kaneko No. 211).

of speech, corresponds to the syllable Ā. That which has no origination but appears as an apparition and capable of having causal action, being in the nature of body, corresponds to the syllable ŌṂ. The intellect which perceives in this way is the illusory and all-embracing Gnosis which, being in the nature of mind, corresponds to the syllable HŪṂ.

As for the third, for example, madder has the capacity for dyeing white cloth red, (p. 11) the sustaining capacity for turning all entities of existence into the sphere of Enlightenment is obtained through the understanding of the "one cause" and also understanding through the procedure of the syllables.

As for the fourth, the understanding that all elements of existence have always been present as the realm of Enlightenment from the beginning[92] is neither contrary to the intention of the scriptures nor contradictory to the precepts though one does not rely on either of these. One comprehends it directly with one's own intellect through the means of total faith.[93]

As for the path of faith, the comprehension of the four ways of understanding is the path of the yogi. However, this is not like the practice in which one looks forward to the time when the aim is realised because of the preparation that preceded it. It is the direct comprehension through faith. Success in this is characterised as follows:

1. Grasping the outlook of the four ways of understanding is the token of knowledge.
2. Repeated practice is the token of taking up.
3. Realisation through the strength of the practice is the token of the Result.

(p. 12) These three aspects of characterisation demonstrate the sequence, the purpose, and the ultimate purpose.

As for the sequence, it is the comprehension that all entities of existence in *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* have always been in the sphere of Buddha-nature, *viz*. body, speech and mind. Understanding through blessing betokens knowledge of causality and that leads to the accomplishment of Buddha-hood. That is the sequence.

As for the purpose, the elements of existence in *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are

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92 The conception "All the entities of existence are enlightened from the beginning" is a well developed theme in *SNy* (p. 1–5–2) itself and in his *gSang sngags rdo rje theg pa'i tshul las snang ba lhar sgrub pa* (f. 340), Rong-zom explains it thus: "All the entities of existence that appear (to us) are only the erring (of the mind). However, there is no such thing as an un-erring after removing the erring itself. When the erring is sublimated by its own self-existence, it is Enlightenment. That is why one says that "all the entities of existence are enlightened from the beginning" (*snang ba'i chos 'di dag thams cad 'khrul ba yin zad de/ de yang 'khrul ba bsal nas ma 'khrul ba shig bsgrub tu med te/ 'khrul ba'i ngo bo nyid rnam par dag pas sangs rgyas pa yin te/ de bas na chos thams cad ye nas mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa'o/*).

93 For more details on the "four ways of understanding", see *MTG* pp. 101–3; *KC* f. 318–22.

given names, such as the five medicines, the five nectars, etc. and they have always been in the great equilibrium of Enlightenment. To take up such an attitude—in which nothing is preferred to anything else—is the token of entrance. This is the purpose since it is the cause of attaining Buddhahood.

As for the ultimate purpose (p. 13) it is to realise that all the entities of existence are spontaneous from the very beginning and in them nothing is to be accepted or rejected. To realise that *saṃsāra* is totally in the nature of Enlightenment and take it as existing spontaneously in the character of *nirvāṇa* is the characteristic of effect. The realisation of the state of the "Ornamental Wheel" of the boundless Buddha body, speech, and mind is the ultimate purpose.

To achieve this state of spontaneity, one must strive to practise the yoga of which there are four categories:

1. "Reliance".
2. "Close reliance".
3. Acquirement.
4. The Great Acquirement.

As for "Reliance", it means to understand the *bodhicitta*, i.e. to understand that all elements of existence are in the nature of Enlightenment from the beginning and so there is neither a thing that has to undergo alteration with counteragents nor is there anything that has to be acquired by following a path.

As for the "Close reliance", it means knowing that one is oneself the divinity. Just as all the existence has been in the nature of Enlightenment from the very beginning so one is oneself in the nature of divinity. Therefore, one must realise that one does not strive to acquire divinity for oneself.

As for Acquirement, it is to cultivate the *prajñā*, (p. 14) the "Great Discriminative Knowledge" who is nothing else but the celestial sphere itself. She appears in the form of earth, water, fire and wind. One must realise that it is she who has been active from the very beginning.[94]

As for the Great Acquirement, it is the junction between Means (*upāya*) and "Discriminative Knowledge" (*prajñā*) i.e. the primordial union of the five great consorts—whose womb is present as the *śūnyatā*—and the five Buddhas of the five *skandha* emanating *bodhicitta* which is present as their offspring. Their union is in a state where apparition plays with apparition and where one experiences the blissfulness of the continuation of the apparitional supreme bliss which is totally devoid of any conceptualisation, for the union takes place in the mental sphere.[95] In such a state,

[94] Here *yum* is active (*bya ba byed pa*), Cf. note 89.

[95] The construction of this passage is obviously very clumsy. An attempt has been

the four kinds of *mārā* are subdued and the ultimate goal is realised.[96]

(This realisation is achieved in the following manner):

All existence is pure from the beginning and is an imaginary temple which is round like a wheel and all pervading. It is the supreme self-made *maṇḍala* from the very beginning. Hearing the teaching of the Vehicle of Means is the way one's eyes are opened. The understanding of the teaching is to see the *maṇḍala* itself. The putting into practice of the understanding of that teaching means (p. 15) to enter the *maṇḍala*. The great realisation attained (from the practice of that teaching) is the perception of the interior of the *maṇḍala*. This procedure signifies the final stage of the Great Perfection. It means that one arrives spontaneously[97] at the level of the Great Merit, the "Wheel of the Syllables".[98]

This teaching is for the highly intelligent adepts who can understand the significance of Enlightenment from the beginning and who embark on this path with firm steps.[99] It is not a pursuit for the ordinary man. Even though he hears and thinks about it, he will have no faith in truth. On the contrary, because of his ignorance, he will have difficulties in understanding and believing in truthfulness and profundity. He might think that "Every teaching is like that!" He will despise the holy man saying: "All this is not true!" He will have a critical attitude towards the teaching. It is because of this that it is being kept secret and is taught as the "hidden path". Therefore, until the understanding of the converts about the inherent Enlightenment in all existence is mature enough, one strives for the well-being of sentient beings through the "Low Vehicles" so that one may not waste one's efforts. A teacher must instruct (this kind of pupil) (p. 16) on the defects of *saṃsāra* and the good qualities of *nirvāṇa*. Above all, the teacher himself must be learned in all the vehicles. It is strongly advised that one whose knowledge is partial must not hold the position of a teacher.

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made to fit in several elements of different origin in especially the *rnam thar sgo gsum* (*trīṇivimokṣamukha*):

*prajñā, yum, śūnyatā*
*upāya, yab, apraṇihita,* } *bodhicitta, sprul ba lcam dral, animitta*

[96] On these four kinds of yoga, see *MTG* pp. 105–7; *KC* f. 327–29.

[97] The expression *lhun gyis 'jug pa*, Lit. "entering automatically or spontaneously" has a particular sense here. In *MTG* (p. 111), it is preceded by *ma brtsal*, hence "to enter spontaneously without effort".

[98] This is the 13th *bhūmi* and the last one in the rNying ma pa tantric tradition (*MTG* p. 109).

[99] The expression *drag dal du 'gro ba* here is explained as: "to go with fast steps means to go simultaneously, and not gradually" (*gom pa drag dal 'gro zhes bya ba ni/ cig car 'gro ba ste rim kyis(sic) 'gro ba bkag pa'o/*). *MTG* further emphasizes the point by rejecting the interpretation of some of the earlier teachers (*sngon gyi slob dpon la la dag*) who had taken the gradualist position.

The distinction between the views is also made according to whether one takes up the practice of asceticisms. The Phyal ba and the Mur thug pa do not generally practise asceticism. There are four sorts of persons who take up the practice of asceticism: the rGyang 'phen pa and the Mur thug pa who follow mundane asceticism, the Śrāvaka and the Bodhisattva who follow pure asceticism, the supreme asceticism.

The Phyal ba does not practise asceticism since he is ignorant about the cause and effect. The Mur thug pa has no respect for asceticism since he is a nihilist. As to the rGyang 'phen pa, he perseveres in keeping himself hygienic in order to acquire certain qualities during this life time. As for the Mu stegs pa, he believes in a permanent self and in order to purify it, he takes up physical hardship abusing his body by keeping himself in the five kinds of fire.

As for the asceticism of the Śrāvaka, the *Vinaya* says:[100]

"No offence whatsoever is to be committed,
Virtues are to be exercised as best one can,
One's own mind is to be tamed thoroughly,
Such is the Buddha's doctrine!" (p. 17)

So in his view all the elements of existence, whether good or bad, exist separately and fall respectively under the categories of the absolute and conventional truths. He perseveres in practising the virtue and avoiding vice.

As to the asceticism of the Bodhisattva, the *Byang chub sems dpa'i sdom pa* says:[101]

"Not making concessions according to circumstance
Not exhibiting miraculous powers and threats, etc.,
There is no lapse in these actions provided they are done with compassion and love,
And when in a virtuous frame of mind."

As for the supreme asceticism, the *Dam tshig chen po'i mdo*[102] says:

"Even though one indulges in the five passions,
One's vow is (still) in the excellent form,
Just like a flower growing in mud."

As all elements of existence have been in the state of equanimity from the very beginning, no compassion is to be sought, no hatred is to be avoided. However, it does not mean that those who have not understood this way

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[100] *Pratimokṣasūtra, K* Vol. 42, No. 1031, p. 149–3–3.
[101] The *Byang chub sems dpa'i sdom pa nyi shu ba, T* Vol. 114, No. 5582, p. 253–2–7.
[102] This work remains unidentified for the present.

do not have compassion, (p. 18) for to the extent that one holds that all the existence is pure from the very beginning so also one correctly practises asceticism.

> This hidden rosary of views,
> May it come across a good person, if there is any,
> Who is endowed with intelligence and dexterity,
> In the way of a blind man opening his own eyes and recovering his sight!

The end of the precept, entitled the Rosary of Views, composed by the Great Teacher Padmasambhava.

## Transliteration of the Tibetan text of MTPh*

(p. 1) man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba zhes bya ba bzhugs so/

(p. 2) lta ba dang theg pa la stsogs[1] pa'i khyad par bsdus pa'i bskyud[2] byang/ bcom ldan 'das 'jam dpal gzhon nu dang/ rdo rje chos la phyag 'tshal lo/

'jig rten gyi khams na sems can phyin ci log gi lta ba grangs med pa'i[3] mdo rnam pa bzhir 'duds te/ phyal ba dang/ rgyang 'phen[4] dang/ mur thug pa[5] dang/ mu stegs pa'o/

de la phyal ba ni chos thams cad rgyu dang 'bras bu yod med du ma rtogs[6] te/ kun tu rmongs pa'o/ rgyang 'phen ni[7] tshe snga phyi yod med du ma rtogs[8] shing/ tshe gcig la btsan phyug dang mthu stobs sgrub[9] pa ste/ 'jig rten gyi gsang tshig la brten pa'o/ mur thug pa ni/[10] chos thams cad[11] rgyu dang 'bras bu med pa ste/ tshe gcig la skyes pa'i chos thams cad kyang[12] glo bur du skyes la mtha' chad par lta ba'o[13]/ mu stegs pa ni chos thams cad la kun tu btags pa'i[14] (p. 3) bdag rtag pa yod par lta ba ste/ de la yang rgyu med la 'bras bu yod par lta[15] ba dang/ rgyu 'bras log par lta ba dang/ rgyu yod pa la 'bras bu med par lta ste/[16] 'di dag ni ma rig pa'i lta ba'o/ 'jig rten las 'das pa'i lam la yang rnam pa gnyis te/ mtshan nyid kyi theg pa dang/[17] rdo rje'i theg pa'o/

mtshan nyid kyi theg pa la yang rnam pa gsum ste/ nyan thos kyi theg pa dang/ rang sangs rgyas kyi theg pa dang/ byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa'o/

* **R** *Man ngag lta ba'i phreng ba, Selected Writings of Rong-zom chos-kyi-bzang-po*, New Delhi 1977. **P** Japanese reproduction of the Peking edition of the *bsTan 'gyur*, vol. 83, no. 4726.
In editing the present text, I have carefully compared the text of the sNar thang edition with the versions **R** and **P**. As the sNar-thang one is practically identical to the verions P. I have therefore not used it as an independent version and preferred the Peking edition since it is now more readily available in libraries.

[1] **R** rtsogs, **P** sogs—[2] **P** bskyus—[3] **R** pa—[4] **P** phan—[5] **R** thug dang—[6] **P** gtogs—[7] **P** pa—[8] **P** gtogs—[9] **P** bsgrub—[10] **P** ni chos—[11] **P** cad ni—[12] **R** cad glo—[13] **P** lta'o—[14] **R** brtags pas—[15] **P** blta—[16] **P** lta ba'o—[17] **R** dang rdo

de la nyan thos kyi theg pa la zhugs pa rnams kyi lta ba ni/[1] chos thams cad la mu stegs pa la stsogs[2] pas sgro dang skur bas kun tu btags pa[3]/ ye med pa chad pa'i[4] lta ba dang/ nag pa la stsogs pa[5] yod par lta ba ni/ thag pa la sbrul mthong ba bzhin du[6] med de/ phung po khams dang (p. 4) skye mched la stogs pa[7] 'byung ba chen po bzhi'i rdul phra rab dang/ rnam par shes pa ni don dam par yod par lta zhing/[8] 'phags pa'i bden pa bzhi sgom[9] pas rim gyis[10] 'bras bu rnam pa bzhi 'grub[11] pa yin no/

rang sangs rgyas kyi theg pa la zhugs pa rnams kyi lta ba ni/ chos thams cad la mu stegs la sogs pas sgro dang skur bas kun tu btags pa'i[12] bdag rtag pa la sogs pa med par lta ba[13] nyan thos dang mthun/ de las[14] khyad par du gzugs kyi phung po[15] chos kyi khams kyi phyogs gcig la bdag med par rtogs shing/ rang sangs rgyas[16] kyi 'bras bu 'thob[17] pa'i dus na'ang/[18] nyan thos ltar dge ba'i bshes gnyen la mi ltos par sngon goms pa'i shugs kyis rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba yan lag bcu gnyis[19] kyi sgo nas chos nyid zab mo'i don[20] rtogs nas/ rang sangs rgyas[21] kyi 'bras bu 'grub[22] pa yin no/

byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa la zhugs pa rnams kyi lta ba ni/ kun nas nyon mongs pa dang rnam par byang ba'i chos thams cad don (p. 5) dam par ni rang bzhin med pa yin la/ kun rdzob du ni sgyu ma tsam du so so'i[23] mtshan nyid ma 'dres par yod de/ pha rol du phyin pa bcu spyad pa'i 'bras bu sa bcu rim gyis[24] bgrod pa'i mtha' bla na med pa'i byang chub tu 'grub par 'dod pa yin no/

rdo rje'i theg pa la yang rnam pa[25] gsum ste/ bya ba'i[26] rgyud kyi theg pa dang/ gnyis ka'i[27] rgyud kyi theg pa dang/ rnal 'byor rgyud kyi theg pa'o/

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[1] **P** zhugs pa'i lta ba rnams ni/—[2] **R** rtsogs, **P** sogs—[3] **P** bkur btab pa'i—[4] **P** med pa'i lta—[5] **R** rtsogs pa'i—[6] **P** ba med—[7] **R** rtsogs pa'i—[8] **P** lta ba dang—[9] **R** bsgoms—[10] **P** rims kyis—[11] **P** grub—[12] **P** bkur bar kun tu rtags pa'i—[13] **P** ba ni—[14] **P** de la—[15] **R** pos—[16] **R** rang byang chub kyi—[17] **P** thob—[18] **P** yang—[19] **P** ba bcu—[20] **P** mo rtogs—[21] **R** rang byang chub kyi—[22] **R** thob—[23] **P** tsam du mtshan nyid—[24] **P** rims kyis—[25] **P** yang gsum—[26] **P** ba—[27] **P** ka

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de la bya ba'i[1] rgyud kyi theg pa la zhugs pa rnams kyi lta ba ni/ don dam par skye 'gag med pa las/ kun rdzob tu lha'i gzugs kyi skur bsgom zhing[2] sku'i gzugs brnyan dang/ thugs mtshan dang/ bzlas brjod dang/ gtsang sbra dang/ dus tshigs dang/ gza' dang/ rgyu skar la sogs pa/ gtso bor[3] yo byad dang rgyu rkyen 'tshogs[4] pa'i mthu las 'grub[5] pa'o/

gnyis ka'i[6] rgyud kyi theg pa la zhugs pa rnams kyi lta ba ni/ don dam par skye 'gag med pa las/ kun rdzob tu lha'i gzugs kyi skur bsgom zhing/

de nyid rnam pa bzhi[7] dang ldan par[8] bsgom pa'i ting nge (p. 6) 'dzin dang/ yo byad dang rgyu rkyen la sogs pa gnyis ka la brten pa las 'grub pa'o/[9]

rnal 'byor rgyud kyi theg pa la zhugs pa rnams kyi lta ba ni rnam pa gnyis te/ rnal 'byor phyi pa thub pa[10] rgyud kyi theg pa dang/ rnal 'byor nang pa thabs kyi rgyud kyi theg pa'o/ de la rnal 'byor phyi pa thub pa[11] rgyud kyi theg pa la zhugs pa rnams kyi lta ba ni/ phyi yo byad la gtso bor mi 'dzin par don dam pa skye 'gag med pa'i lha dang lha mo dang/ de dang 'dra ba'i rgyud yongs su dag pa'i ting nge 'dzin gyis[12] 'phags pa'i gzugs kyi sku phyag rgya bzhi dang ldan par bsgom pa'i rnal 'byor gtsor byas pa[13] las 'grub pa'o/

rnal 'byor nang pa thabs kyi rgyud kyi theg pa la zhugs pa rnams kyi lta ba ni rnam pa gsum ste/ bskyed pa'i tshul dang/ rdzogs pa'i tshul dang/ rdzogs pa chen po'i tshul lo/ de la bskyed pa'i tshul ni ting nge 'dzin rnam pa gsum rim gyis bskyed de[14] dkyil 'khor rim gyis bkod cing[15] bsgom pas 'grub pa'o/

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[1] **P** ba—[2] **R** dang—[3] **P** gtsor—[4] **R** tshogs—[5] **R** grub—[6] **P** ka—[7] **P** lha'i sku nyid rnam pa bzhi—[8] **R** pa—[9] **P** gnyis ka la yang brten nas 'grub—[10] **R** pa'i—[11] **R** pa'i—[12] **R** gyi—[13] **P** rnal 'byor pa'i gtsor byas pas 'grub pa—[14] **P** rims bzhin du bskyed cing—[15] **P** rim bzhin bkod nas

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rdzogs pa'i tshul ni don dam par skye 'gag med pa'i lha (p. 7) dang lha mo dang/[1] rnam par mi rtog pa'i don dbu ma chos kyi dbyings las kyang ma g.yos la/ kun rdzob tu 'phags pa'i[2] gzugs kyi sku yang gsal bar bsgom zhing mnyam la ma 'dres par bsgom pas 'grub pa'o/

rdzogs pa chen po'i tshul ni/ 'jig rten dang 'jig rten las 'das pa'i chos thams cad dbyer med par sku gsung thugs kyi dkyil 'khor gyi rang bzhin ye nas yin par rtogs nas sgom pa ste/ de yang rgyud las/

rdo rje pung po'i yan lag ni/
rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas lnga ru grags/
skye mched khams rnams[3] mang po kun/
byang chub sems dpa'i skyil 'khor nyid/
sa chu spyan dang ma mākī/
me rlung gos dkar sgrol ma ste/
nam mkha' dbyings kyi dbang phyug ma/
srid gsum ye nas rnam par dag/

ces 'byung ste/ 'khor ba dang mya ngan las 'das pa'i chos thams cad ye nas ma skyes la/ bya ba[4] byed nus pa'i sgyu ma bde bar gshesg pa yab yum bcu la sogs pa'i rang bzhin ye nas yin (p. 8) pa'i phyir/ chos thams cad rang bzhin gyis[5] mya ngan las 'das pa ste/ chen po lnga ni yum lnga'i rang bzhin/ phung po lnga ni rigs lnga'i sangs rgyas/[6] rnam par shes pa bzhi ni byang chub sems dpa'i bzhi'i rang bzhin/ yul bzhi ni mdzes pa'i[7]

lha mo bzhi'i rang bzhin/ dbang po bzhi ni byang chub sems dpa' bzhi'i rang bzhin/ dus bzhi ni mchod pa'i lha mo bzhi'i rang bzhin/ lus kyi dbang po dang rnam par shes pa dang/ yul dang de las 'byung[8] ba'i byang chub sems ni/[9] khro bo bzhi'i rang bzhin/ rtag chad mu bzhi ni khro mo bzhi'i rang bzhin/ yid kyi rnam par shes pa ni byang chub kyi sems rdo rje kun tu bzang po'i rang

[1] **P** mo'i rnam par—[2] **P** kun rzob tu gzugs kyi—[3] **R** khams mang—[4] **P** bya byed—[5] **R** gyi—[6] **P** rgyas la/—[7] **P** pa—[8] **R** byung—[9] **P** sems dpa' ni/

bzhin/ yul chos 'dus byas dang[1] 'dus ma byas ni/ chos bya ba mo[2] kun tu bzang mo'i rang bzhin te/ de dag kyang ye nas mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa'i rang bzhin yin gyi/[3] da lam gyis bsgrub pa ma yin no/ de ltar phyogs bcu dang[4] dus gsum dang/ khams gsum la sogs pa 'dus byas dang 'dus ma byas pa'i chos thams (p. 9) cad rang gi sems las gud na med/ ji skad du/

rang sems[5] so sor rtogs pa ni/
sangs rgyas byang chub de nyid do/
'jig rten gsum po[6] de nyid do/
'byung ba che rnams de nyid do/

zhes 'byung ngo/ ji skad du/

chos thams cad ni sems la gnas so/
sems ni nam mkha' la gnas so/
nam mkha' ni ci la yang[7] mi gnas so/

zhes 'byung ba dang/

chos thams cad ni ngo bo nyid kyis[8] stong pa'o/
chos thams cad ni gdod[9] ma nas rnam par dag pa'o/
chos thams cad ni yongs kyis 'od gsal ba'o/
chos thams cad ni rang bzhin gyis mya ngan las 'das pa'o/
chos thams cad ni ye nas[10] mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas so/

zhes gsungs so/ 'di ni[11] rdzogs pa chen po'i tshul lo/[12] rdzogs pa chen po'i tshul de ni/[13] rtogs pa rnam pa bzhi'i[14] lam gyis yid ches te/[15] de la rdzogs pa chen po ni/[16] bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs rdzogs pas/[17] 'bras bu'i chos lhun gyis[18] grub pa'i don to/ tshul ni don la 'jug pa'o/ (p. 10)

[1] **R** 'dus dang 'dus ma—[2] **P** 'dus ma byas ni/kun—[3] **P** gyis—[4] **P** bcu dus gsum—[5] **P** rang gi sems—[6] **R** pa—[7] **P** ci yang—[8] **R** kyi—[9] **P** gzod—[10] **R** thams cad ni mngon—[11] **P** 'di rdzogs—[12] **R** chen po'o/[13] **P** tshul ni/[14] **P** rnam bzhi—[15] **P** ches pa ste/[16] **R** chen po'i tshul ni/[17] **R** pa—[18] **R** gyi

rtogs pa rnam pa bzhi ni/[1] rgyu gcig par rtogs pa dang/ yig 'bru'i tshul gyis rtogs pa dang/ byin gyis rlob kyis[2] rtogs pa dang/ mngon sum par rtogs pa'o/

de la rgyu gcig par rtogs pa ni/ chos thams cad don dam par ma skyes pas[3] so so ma yin pa dang/ kun rdzob du sgyu ma'i mtshan nyid kyis[4] so so ma yin pa dang/ ma skyes pa nyid chu zla ltar sgyu ma sna tshogs su snang zhing bya ba byed[5] nus pa dang/ sgyu ma nyid ngo bo med de ma skyes pas kun rdzob dang don dam par dbyer med pas rgyu gcig par rtogs pa'o/

yig 'bru'i tshul gyis rtogs pa ni/ chos thams cad ma skyes pa ni A ste gsung gi rang bzhin[6]/ ma skyes pa nyid sgyu mar snang zhing bya ba byed nus pa ni ŌṂ ste[7] sku'i rang bzhin/ de ltar rtogs pa'i rig pa sgyu ma'i ye shes mtha' dbus med pa ni HŪṂ ste[8] thugs kyi rang bzhin du rtogs pa'o/

byin gyis rlob kyis[9] rtogs pa ni/ dper na ras dkar po la dmar por[10] byin gyis rlob pa'i mthu btsod[11] la yod pa bzhin du/ chos (p. 11) thams cad sangs rgyas[12] par byin gyis rlob pa'i mthu yang/ rgyu gcig pa dang yig 'bru'i tshul gyi mthus byin gyis rlob par[13] rtogs pa'o/

mngon sum par rtogs pa ni/ chos thams cad ye nas sangs rgyas par gnas pa de yang lung dang man ngag dang 'gal ba yang ma yin la/ lung dang man ngag gi tshig tsam la brten[14] pa yang ma yin par/ rang gi rig pas blo'i gting du yid ches pas[15] mngon sum du rtogs pa'o/

lam gyis[16] yid ches pa ni/ rtogs pa rnam pa bzhi'i don rig pa nyid[17] rnal 'byor pa'i lam ste/[18] de yang rgyu bsgrub pas 'bras bu 'byung

[1] **P** rnam bzhi ni/—[2] **P** brlabs par rtogs—[3] **R** pa—[4] **R** nyid du—[5] **R** byas byed—[6] **P** rang bzhin la/—[7] **R** o ste—[8] **R** om ste—[9] **R** brlabs kyi—[10] **P** dmar pos—[11] **P** rtsod—[12] **P** rgya—[13] **P** brlabs par—[14] **P** rten—[15] **P** ches par—[16] **P** lam gyi—[17] rig pa de nyid—[18] **P** lam yin ste/

ba'i dus la ltos pa lta bu[1] ma yin gyi/ rang gis[2] mngon sum du rtogs shing yid ches pa'o/

de la mtshan nyid gsum gyis don mthar phyin par 'gyur te/ rtogs pa rnam pa bzhi'i[3] tshul rig pa ni shes pa'i mtshan nyid do/ yang nas yang du goms par byed pa ni 'jug pa'i mtshan nyid do/ goms pa'i mthus mngon du gyur pa ni 'bras bu'i mtshan nyid/ (p. 12)

mtshan nyid gsum gyis[4] 'brel ba dang/ dgos pa dang/ dgos pa'i yang dgos pa ston te/[5] de la 'brel ba ni/ kun nas nyon mongs pa dang/[6] rnam par byang ba'i chos su btags[7] pa thams cad/ ye nas sku gsung thugs kyi bdag nyid/ rang bzhin gyis sangs rgyas pa'i dbyings dang/ byin gyis rlob[8] pa'i don rtogs pa ni/ rgyu shes pa'i mtshan nyid de/ de ni bla na med pa'i sangs rgyas su 'grub pa'i rgyu yin pa'i don du 'brel ba'o/[9]

dgos pa ni/ kun nas nyon mongs pa dang/ rnam par byang ba'i chos

dang/[10] sman lnga dang/ bdud rtsi lnga la sogs par btags pa thams cad ye nas sangs rgyas pa'i mnyam pa chen po la blang dor med par spyod pa ni 'jug pa'i mtshan nyid do/ de ni bla na med pa'i sangs rgyas su 'grub[11] pa'i rgyu yin pa'i phyir dgos pa'o/

dgos pa'i yang dgos pa ni/ kun nas nyon mongs pa dang rnam par byang ba'i chos dang/ sman lnga dang/ bdud rtsi lnga la sogs khyad par du btags pa thams cad (p. 13) ye nas sangs rgyas pa'i mnyam pa chen po'i ngang du blang dor med par lhun gyis grub pa'i phyir/[12] srid pa'i 'khor ba nyid ye nas bla na med par[13] sangs rgyas pa'i rang bzhin mya ngan las 'das pa'i mtshan nyid du[14] lhun gyis grub pa yin pas 'bras bu'i mtshan nyid de/ sku gsung thugs mi zad pa rgyan[15] gyi

[1] **P** lta bu ni ma—[2] **P** rang gi rig pas mngon sum—[3] **P** rnam bzhi'i—[4] **P** gyi—[5] **P** dgos pa'i yang dgos pa'o/—[6] **P** pa'o/—[7] **R** brtags—[8] **P** rlab, **P** brlabs—[9] **P** rtogs pa ni shes pa'i mtshan nyid do/ de bla na med par sangs rgyas su 'grub pa'i rgyu yin pa'i phyir dgos p 'o/—[10] **P** byang ba dang chos dang—[11] **R** grub—[12] **P** blang dor med par srid pa'i—[13] **R** 'khor ba ye nas bla na med pa'i—[14] **P** mtshan nyid lhun—[15] **P** brgyan

'khor lo mngon sum gyur pa[1] ni dgos[2] pa'i dgos pa'o/

de la bsnyen pa dang/ nye ba'i bsnyen pa dang/ sgrub pa dang/ sgrub pa chen po'i don lhun gyis grub par gyur ba'i rnal 'byor[3] la brtson par bya'o/

de la bsnyen pa ni byang chub kyi sems shes pa ste/ de yang chos thams cad ye nas sangs rgyas pa'i rang bzhin du lam[4] gyis bsgrub cing gnyen pos bcos su med par rtogs pa'o/

nye ba'i bsnyen pa ni bdag nyid lhar shes pa ste/ de yang chos thams cad ye nas sangs rgyas pa'i rang bzhin du yin pas/[5] bdag nyid kyang ye nas lha'i rang bzhin yin gyi da ltar[6] bsgrub pa ni ma yin par rtogs pa'o/

sgrub[7] pas ni yum bskyed pa ste/ de yang yum chen mo nam mkha'i (p. 14) dbyings las/ nam mkha' nyid yum chen mo sa chu me rlung bzhir snang zhing/ bya ba byed pa'i yum[8] ye nas yin par rtogs pa'o/

sgrub pa chen po ni[9] thabs dang shes rab 'brel ba ste/ de yang yum chen mo lnga'i shes rab dang/ yum gyi mkha'[10] stong pa nyid las/ phung po lnga'i sangs rgyas thabs kyi[11] yab smon pa med par ye nas zung du gyur[12] pa'i 'brel ba las/ byang chub sems sprul pa lcam dral du gyur ba'i rang bzhin ni/[13] ye nas sangs rgyas pa'i don sgyu ma la sgyu ma rol cing[14] bde mchog sgyu ma'i rgyun la bde ba'i dus nyid na/ mtshan ma med pa'i don mi dmigs mkha'[15] dang snyoms pa ni klong du gyur nas lhun gyis grub pa ste/ bdud rnam bzhi yang brtul bas[16] mthar phyin pa'i don 'grub pa'o/

chos thams cad gdod ma[17] nas rnam par dag pa'i yid bzhin gyi gzhal

[1] **P** mngon du gyur pa—[2] **R** dgongs pa'i dgos pa'o/—[3] bsgrub pa dang bsgrub pa chen pos/ don lhun gyis grub par gyur pas/ rnal 'byor—[4] **P** bzhin du da lam—[5] **R** bzhin

pas/—[6] **P** rang bzhin yin par shes gyi/ da bsgrub pa—[7] **P** bsgrub—[8] **P** bya ba med pa'i yum—[9] **P** bsgrub pa ni—[10] **P** nam mkha'—[11] **P** kyis—[12] **P** 'gyur—[13] sprul pa tsam bral du—[14] **R** don la sgyu ma la sgyu mar rol ching—[15] nam mkha'—[16] **R** nas—[17] gzod ma

yas khang rgya yongs su ma chad pa'i 'khor[1] lo ye nas bla na med pa'i dkyil 'khor du 'jug pa yang/ thabs kyi theg pa'i gzhung[2] thos pa ni mig phye ba'o/ don rtogs pa ni dkyil 'khor mthong ba'o/ rtogs nas goms (p. 15) par byed pa ni dkyil 'khor du zhugs pa'o/ zhugs nas mngon du gyur ba ni dngos grub chen po thob pa'o/

de ltar tshul 'di ni rdzogs pa chen po mthar phyin pa'i don/ yi ge 'khor lo tshogs chen gyi sa la lhun gyis 'jug pa ste/ skyes bu blo rtsal rab kyis ye nas sangs rgyas pa'i don la ye nas sangs rgyas par rig nas/[3] gom pa drag dal[4] du 'gro ba yin gyi phal gyis[5] bya ba ni ma yin no/ phal gyis thos te ji ltar bsams[6] kyang bden zhing zab par[7] yid ches par mi 'gyur ro/ yid ma ches pa[8] dang phal gyi blo la go dka' zhing[9] bden pa dang zab par[10] ma shes pa'i nyams dang sbyar nas/ kun kyang de dang 'dra snyam nas[11] yo rdzun zhes skyes bu rab la[12] yang skur ba[13] 'debs shing/ sun 'byin pa'i blo skye[14] bar 'gyur bas rab tu gsang ba'i phyir yang gsang ba'i theg pa[15] zhes bka' stsal to/ de bas na chos thams cad ye nas sangs rgyas pa'i don rtogs pa'i[16] blo ma skye bar du[17] theg pa[18] 'og ma bas[19] 'gro ba'i don byas na[20] gdul bya chud mi za[21] bas slob dpon gyis 'khor ba'i skyon dang/ mya ngan las 'das pa'i yon tan dang/ theg pa mtha' dag[22] la mkhas (p. 16) par bya ba[23] yin gyi/ phyogs tsam shes pas[24] slob spon gyi sa gzung du[25] mi rung bar rgya cher 'byung ngo/

lta ba'i khyad par[26] dka' thub dang brtul zhugs kyang bye brag tu 'gyur te/ dka' thub med pa ni/ 'jig rten phyal ba dang mur thug go/

[1] **P** ma chad 'khor lo—[2] **P** gsung—[3] **P** pas—[4] **R** drag rdal—[5] **R** gyi—[6] **R** bsam—[7] **P** bzang bar—[8] **R** yid ches pa—[9] blo la dka' zhing—[10] **P** bzang bar—[11] **P** snyam ste—[12] **R** yong brdzun zhes[13] **P** yang bskur ba—[14] **P** skyes—[15] **P** thigs pa—[16] **R** don la rtogs pa'i—[17] **P** ma skyes kyi bar du—[18] **R** theg pas—[19] **P** 'og ma 'gro ba'i—[20] **P** nas—[21] gdul bya mi za bas—[22] **P** thams cad—[23] **P** byed pa—[24] **R** phyogs 'ga' mi shes—[25] **R** bzung du—[26] **R** khyad par gyi dka' thub

dka' thub yod pa ni rnam pa bzhi ste/ rgyang 'phen dang/[1] mu stegs pa ste/ 'jig rten gyi[2] dka' thub dang/ nyan thos kyi dka' thub dang/ byang chub sems dpa'i dka' thub bo/ de bla na med pa'i dka' thub bo/

de la phyal ba ni rgyu 'bras la rmongs pa'i phyir dka' thub med pa'o/[3] mur thug pa ni chad lta ba'i phyir dka' thub med pa'o/[4] rgyang 'phen ni[5] tshe 'di'i khyad par dag bsgrub pa'i[6] phyir gtsang sbra la sogs pa'i dka' thub can no/ mu stegs pa ni bdag rtag pa zhig[7] yod pa de dag par bya ba'i phyir/ lus sun 'byin cing me lnga brten[8] pa la sogs pa'i dka' thub dang/ brtul zhugs log par spyod pa'o/

nyan thos kyi dka' thub ni/ 'dul ba las/

sdig pa ci yang mi bya ste/
dge ba phun sum tshogs par spyad/
rang gi sems ni yongs su gdul/
'di ni sangs rgyas bstan pa yin/ (p. 17)

zhes 'byung ste/ dge ba dang mi dge ba'i chos thams cad kun rdzob dang don dam pa[9] gnyis so sor yod par lta ba dang/ dge ba ni spyod mi dge ba ni spong ba'i dka' thub dang brtul[10] zhugs spyod pa'o/

byang chub sems dpa'i dka' thub ni/ byang chub sems dpa'i[11] sdom pa las/

rkyen du 'tsham par don mi byed/[12]
rdzu[13] 'phrul bsdigs la sogs mi byed/
snying rje[14] ldan zhing byams phyir dang/
sems dge ba la nyes pa med/

ces 'byung ste/ snying rje chen pos zin na dge ba dang mi dge ba'i chos gang[15] spyad kyang sdom pa nyams par mi 'gyur ro/ byang chub sems dpa'i dka' thub ni/[16] mdor na snying rje chen pos gzhi bzung nas spyad do/

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[1] **P** rgyang phan pa—[2] **P** rten pa'i—[3] **P** med do/—[4] **P** med do/—[5] **P** rgyang phan pa—[6] **R** khyad par sgrub pa'i—[7] **P** bdag tu brtag cig yod—[8] **P** rten—[9] **P** par—[10] **R** btul—[11] **P** byang chub sems dpa' byang chub sems dpa'i sdom pa la/—[12] par tshar mi gcod/—[13] **P** rdzun—[14] **R** rjer—[15] **R** na chos thams cad dge ba dang mi dge ba—[16] **R** sdom pa ni/

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bla na med pa'i dka' thub ni/ dam tshig chen po'i mdo las/

sangs rgyas theg par rab nges na/
nyon mongs 'dod lnga kun spyad kyang/
padma la ni 'dam[1] bzhin te/
de la tshul khrims phun sum tshogs/

zhes[2] 'byung ste/ chos thams cad ye nas mnyam pa nyid kyi phyir/ snying rje ni bsten[3] du med la/ zhe sdang ni spang du med de/ de ltar ma rtogs pa la thugs rje mi 'byung ba ma (p. 18) yin te/ ji ltar lta bas ye nas rnam par dag pa rtogs pa[4] bzhin du dka' thub dang brtul[5] zhugs kyang/ de ltar rnam par dag par spyod do/[6]

lta ba'i phreng ba gsang ba 'di/[7]
dmus long rang phye mig rnyed ltar/[8]
shes rab thabs kyi rtsal 'chang ba'i/
skyes mchog yod na 'phrad gyur cig/[9]

lta ba'i phreng ba zhes bya ba'i man ngag rdzogs so/[10] slob dpon chen po padma 'byung gnas kyis mdzad pa'o// mangalam//

[1] **R** ’dams—[2] **R** ces—[3] **P** rten—[4] **P** lta bas ye nas/ ye nas rnam par rtog pa bzhin/ dka’ thub—[5] **R** btul—[6] **P** de ltar rnam par spyod do—[7] **P** lta ba ’phreng ba’i gsang rab ’di/—[8] **P** dbu long rang phye mig med ltar/—[9] **P** phrad par shod/—[10] **P** man ngag gi rgyal po lta ba’i ’phreng ba rdzogs so/ The text **P** ends just here. It has no colophon.

## *Theg pa rim pa dgu*

### *Diagram I*

*PT* 849 (*Formulaire Sanskrit-tibétain du Xe siècle*, J. Hackin, Paris 1924, p. 2):

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I. | mi'i theg pa | |
| II. | lha'i theg pa | |
| III. | nyan thos kyi theg pa | |
| IV. | rang sangs rgyas kyi theg pa | |
| V. | mdo sde'i theg pa | |
| VI. | byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa | |
| VII. | mdzo ga (yoga) | 1. 'dzo ga (yoga) |
| | | 2. ma ha 'dzo ga (Mahāyoga) |
| | | 3. a nu 'dzo ga (Anuyoga) |
| | | 4. a ti 'dzo ga (Atiyoga) |
| VIII. | kyir (kriyā) | 1. nyan thos ki(kyi) kir ya (Kriyā) |
| | | 2. rang sangs rgyas ki(kyi) kyir ya (Kriyā) |
| | | 3. mdo sde'i gir ya (Kriyā) |
| | | 4. byang chub sems dpa'i kir ya (Kriyā) |
| IX. | u pa ya (ubhayā) | 1. nyan thos kyi 'bras bu thob pa |
| | | 2. rang sangs rgyas kyi 'bras bu thob pa |
| | | 3. byang chub sems dpa'i 'bras bu thob pa |
| | | 4. mdo sde'i 'bras bu thob pa |

### *Diagram II*

*YTh*:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I. | nyan thos | 1. mdo sde pa |
| | | 2. bye brag pa |
| II. | rang rgyal | |
| III. | dbu ma'i theg pa *or* theg pa chen po | |
| | A. phyi pa → rnam par rig pa 1. rnam bcas; 2. rnam med; 3. mdo sde dbu ma | |
| | B. nang pa → rnal 'byor dbu ma | |
| IV. | kriyā | |
| V. | gnyis ka rgyud | |
| VI. | rnal 'byor rgyud → rnal 'byor phyi pa | |
| VII. | rnal 'byor che | } rnal 'byor nang pa |
| VIII. | rjes su rnal 'byor | } rnal 'byor nang pa |
| IX. | rnal 'byor mchog | } rnal 'byor nang pa |

### *Diagram III*

*TRSh* (p. 87–3–4):

| | |
|---|---|
| I. | nyan thos |
| II. | rang rgyal |

III. mdo sde *or* mtshan nyid theg pa
- 1. rnam rig pa
- 2. rnal 'byor dbu ma
- 3. mdo sde dbu ma ba *or* dbu ma chen po

IV. Kriya
V. U pa ya (= gnyis ka, *hence* ubhayā)
VI. Yo ga'i theg pa
VII. Ma ha yo ga'i theg pa
VIII. A nu yo ga'i theg pa
IX. A ti yo ga'i theg pa

## *Diagram IV*

### *MTPh*:

mtshan nyid kyi theg pa

I. nyan thos kyi theg pa
II. rang sangs rgyas kyi theg pa
III. byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa

rdo rje'i theg pa

IV. bya ba'i rgyud kyi theg pa
V. gnyis ka'i rgyud kyi theg pa
VI. rnal 'byor rgyud kyi theg pa = rnal 'byor phyi pa thub pa'i rgyud kyi theg pa
VII. bskyed pa'i tshul
VIII. rdzogs pa'i tshul
IX. rdzogs pa chen po'i tshul
} rnal 'byor nang pa thabs kyi rgyud kyi theg pa

## *Diagram V*

### *MTG*:

mtshan nyid kyi theg pa (p. 39)

I. nyan thos kyi theg pa (p. 40)
II. rang sangs rgyas kyi theg pa (p. 41)
III. byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa = theg pa chen po (p. 42)
- A. rnal 'byor spyod pa (p. 70)
  - 1. rnam pa dang bcas par smra ba
    - i. rnam pa bden par smra ba
    - ii. rnam pa bden pa ma yin par smra ba
  - 2. rnam pa myed par smra ba
- B. dbu ma ba (p. 71)
  - 1. rnal 'byor spyod pa'i dbu ma ba
  - 2. mdo sde dbu ma ba

rdo rje'i theg pa (p. 39)

IV. bya ba'i rgyud (p. 75)
V gnyis ka rgyud
VI. rnal 'byor gyi rgyud (p. 75)
} rnal 'byor phyi pa (p. 92)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| VII. | bskyed pa'i tshul (p. 86) | |
| VIII. | rdzogs pa'i tshul (p. 88) | rnal 'byor nang pa (p. 92) |
| IX. | rdzogs pa chen po'i tshul (p. 93) | |

### *Diagram VI*

*Grub mitha' rndzod*:

rgyu mtshan nyid kyi theg pa

I. nyan thos theg pa
II. rang rgyal theg pa
III. byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa
  A. sems tsam
    1. rnam bden pa
    2. rnam rdzun pa
  B. dbu ma
    1. rang rgyud pa
    2. thal 'gyur pa

'bras bu gsang sngags rdo rje theg pa

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| IV. | bya ba'i rgyud | |
| V. | gnyis ka'i rgyud | phyi thub pa rgyud kyi theg pa |
| VI. | rnal 'byor rgyud kyi theg pa | |
| VII. | ma hā yo ga'i theg pa | |
| VIII. | lung a nu yo ga'i theg pa | nang thabs kyi rgyud kyi theg pa |
| IX. | man ngag a ti yo ga'i theg pa | |

### *Diagram VII*

The Bonpo system of the *Theg pa dgu* according to the *gZi brjid* (D.L. Snellgrove, *The Nine Ways of Bon*):

A.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I. | phyva gshen gyi theg pa | |
| II. | snang gshen gyi theg pa | rgyu'i theg pa |
| III. | srid gshen gyi theg pa | |
| IV. | 'phrul gshen gyi theg pa | |
| V. | dge bsnyen gyi theg pa | |
| VI. | drang srong gi theg pa | |
| VI. | a dkar gyi theg pa | 'bras bu'i theg pa |
| VIII. | ye gshen gyi theg pa | |
| IX. | bla med kyi theg pa (= rDzogs chen) | |

The system according to the *Theg pa rim pa mngon du bshad pa'i mdo rgyud*, f.16–17 (Karmay 1977, No. 74):

B.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I. | lha mi gzhan brten theg pa | theg pa chung ngu | rgyu'i theg pa | |
| II. | rang rtogs gshen rab theg pa | | | |
| III. | thugs rje sems dpa'i theg pa | theg pa chen po | | |
| IV. | g.yung drung sems dpa'i theg pa | | | |
| V. | bya ba gtsang spyod ye bon theg pa | phyi'i theg pa | | 'bras bu theg pa |
| VI. | rnam pa kun ldan mngon shes theg pa | | | |
| VII. | dngos bskyed thugs rje rol ba'i theg pa | nang gi theg pa | | |
| VIII. | shin tu don ldan kun rdzogs theg pa | | | |
| IX. | ye nas rdzogs chen yang rtse bla med theg pa | gsang ba'i theg pa | | |

CHAPTER SEVEN

# RDZOGS CHEN THEORIES AND THEIR ORIGINS

As in many religious philosophies, rDzogs chen proposes first of all to reflect upon the *sems*, "mind" which constitutes the central problem in Buddhism. It is the *sems* which creates (Kun-byed rgyal-po)[1] the world of illusion and through its activities it has obscured its own real nature (*sems nyid*) from time immemorial. The "real nature" of the *sems* (*sems kyi rang bzhin*) which is immaculate (*dri bral*) and luminous (*'od gsal ba*) is from the beginning completely pure (*ye nas dag pa*). However, rDzogs chen does not offer to the *sems* any means of releasing itself from its own illusory creation, because to do so it would feed it with the mental discursiveness (*rtog pa*) for creating its own delusion (*'khrul ba*) still further. However, given a chance to revert and look to itself directly and eliminate all conceptualisation, it is then possible for it to recognise its own reality again (*sems kyi chos nyid* or *rang gi rig pa*) from which it strayed and which it has forgotten for so long.

## The Primordial Basis (gdod ma'i gzhi)

The real nature of the *sems* (*sems kyi rang bzhin*) has been the leaven for formulating various theories concerning the spiritual basis (*gzhi*) in many different schools of Tibetan Buddhism. In rDzogs chen this spiritual basis is called *gdod ma'i gzhi*, the Primordial Basis which has always been in a state so perfect and complete (*rdzogs pa*) that nothing more is needed, hence the term *rdzogs pa chen po*, the Great Perfection. Various terms are also applied in reference to its natural fecundity. It is often called the great "universal grandfather" (*spyi mes chen po*)[2] or the "universal grandfather" of all Buddhas (*rgyal ba ril gyi spyi mes*).[3] However, it is also the primeval grandmother (*ye phyi mo*)[4] and so the mother of all Buddhas (*rgyal ba ril gyi yum*).[5] Similarly, it is the mother whilst the *sems* is her lost

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[1] This name occurs as that of the Buddha who preaches rDzogs chen (*KG* f. 6); Rig-pa'i rgyal-po (*IOL* 597); Rang shes-rig-gi rgyal-po (*ZhNy* Nga, p. 46). Cf. p. 52, notes 45, 48.

[2] See p. 108.

[3] *SM* p. 332.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 305: *ye phyi ma*. It is also a title of a Bonpo rDzogs chen text, but not available at present (*BS* pp. 251, 256).

[5] See p. 108.

child and when the *sems* and the *sems nyid* are reunited, that is when an adept attains realisation, the situation is sometimes described as the meeting between the mother and her lost child (*ma bu 'phrad pa*).[6] Likewise, the spiritual basis also called the universal ground (*spyi gzhi* or *spyi sa*)[7] or just simply *gzhi ma*, the base. Other terms are also applied from the point of view of its quality: Primeval Purity (*ka dag*),[8] primeval spontaneity (*ye nas lhun gyis grub pa*),[9] the primeval nature (*ye ji bzhin pa*)[10] or the natural basis (*gzhi ji bzhin pa*).[11] The use of tantric terms such as *bodhicitta* and *rang byung ye shes* to designate the same spiritual basis have already been discussed[12] and here suffice it to say that this fundamental theory is already discernible in early works belonging to the ninth century or earlier, such as the *Rig pa'i khu byug*[13] and the *sBas pa'i rgum chung*,[14] but it is in works like *SM* and *ThCh* of the tenth and eleventh centuries respectively that it is developed and so has taken a more definite form. However, in these works, the structure of the triple axes, *viz.* the spiritual basis (*gzhi*), the process of spiritual development (*lam*) and the realisation of the goal (*'bras bu*), which is prevalent in Tibetan scholastic works on Buddhist philosophy, is not yet known, but later writers like Klong-chen rab-'byams in the fourteenth century adopt it in writings on rDzogs chen.[15]

The Primordial Basis is conceived as being devoid of any conceptualisation (*rtog pa*). It cannot be modified (*ma bcos pa*) and unborn (*ma skyes pa*).[16] It cannot be expressed in terms of a state where opposites such as transcendence and immanence blend or where the non-duality of subject and object is realised or *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are fused, for it is a pure state where dichotomic thought has never arisen and has never been conceived. It is pure and infinite from the very beginning and always perfect in its totality. It is therefore indescribable either in terms of affirmative or negative, but in order to give an idea of this fact, contradictory terms are used, e.g. permanent but impermanent (*rtag la mi rtag pa*), impermanent but permanent (*mi rtag la rtag pa*), nihilistic but non-nihilistic (*chad la ma chad pa*),

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[6] Cf. *ZhNy* Ca., p. 171, Pha, p. 274, Ba, p. 323, Ma, p. 367.
[7] *Klong chen rab 'byams kyi rgyud* (Kaneko No. 50), f. 200; *Rin chen 'khor lo zhes bya ba'i rgyud*, (Kaneko No. 57) ff. 24, 26.
[8] Cf. p. 181.
[9] *SM* p. 323.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 309.
[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 380, 388.
[12] See p. 119.
[13] See p. 56.
[14] See p. 74.
[15] E.g. *Sems dang ye shes kyi dris lan*, *gSung thor bu* (Delhi 1973), pp. 377, 392, and in all his major works, e.g. *Tshig don mdzod*, f. 3a et seq.
[16] *SM* p. 309.

expressible but inexpressible (*brjod du yod la med pa*).[17] So we have the following lines: "however profound the words one says, they cannot be concordant with the principle".[18] Yet this ontological situation should not lead us to think that it is after all a conception of a merely frozen Absolute. It differs radically from the *śūnyatā* theory of the Madhyamaka. The unconditioned and non-contingent *śūnyatā* is primarily conceived as an intellectual object (*spyod yul*), with a varyingly negative outlook according to different schools, whereas the Primordial Basis of rDzogs chen is fundamentally positive and conceived in the sense of a cognitive being (*yul can*). It is the transcendental state of the *sems* (*sems nyid*), but at the same time it is also capable of being a creator through its phenomenal aspect (*sems*).[19]

In rDzogs chen the question of the non-existence of self (*bdag med* = *anātma*), the central doctrine of Buddhism, is rarely evoked, but no examples of non-Buddhist teaching are found there either, though there is no lack of reference to it.[20]

## The conception of chos sku (dharmakāya) in rDzogs chen

The Primordial Basis possesses three specific qualities (*gzhi'i yon tan*). Its state (*ngang*) is pure from the beginning (*ka dag*) and has a physical form (*sku*). Its nature is spontaneous (*lhun gyis grub pa*) and is luminous (*'od gsal ba*). Its self-being (*bdag nyid*) is the primeval intellect (*ye nas shes pa* = *ye shes*) which pervades all (*kun khyab*).[21] This is *chos sku*, the transcendal aspect of the *sems* and is given the name of Kun-tu bzang-po. The application of this symbolical name to the Primordial Basis is already attested in the *Rig pa'i khu byug*[22] and the *sBas pa'i rgum chung*.[23] As Kun-tu bzang-po, the Primordial Basis has to be admitted as having body, face and hands (*zhal phyag rdzogs pa*). It therefore acts as a Buddha preaching his doctrines. Thus we find Kun-tu bzang-po taking the position of a teacher in many rDzogs chen tantras, but also under different names.[24] We have already

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[17] *SM* p. 381, also Cf. pp. 388–89 where the *gzhi* is shown to be inexpressible first by seventeen points (*tha snyad bcu bdun las grol ba*), and later by fifty points (*tha snyad cha lnga bcu las grol ba*, pp. 389–91).

[18] See p. 72, *11*.7–8.

[19] Cf. n. 1.

[20] Cf. p. 152 et seq.

[21] *SM* seems to be the earliest work mentioning this triple aspect of the *gzhi*. It occurs in its prologue (p. 2): *gdod nas lhun gyis grub pa'i ngang/ rang bzhin ngang las ma g.yos kyang/ ma mthong rang bzhin gnyis su snang/ de nyid ngang gyur bdag phyag 'tshal/* Cf. also *Tshig don mdzod*, f. 10a et seq.

[22] See p. 56.

[23] See p. 74.

[24] Cf. n. 1. However, the application of the name varies. Five different types of Kun-

noted in this respect the question of Kun-tu bzang-po being more important than Vajrasattva.[25] In certain texts, the Primordial Basis is presented as the Kun-tu bzang-po of the sphere (*dbyings*), its effulgence as the Kun-tu bzang-po of the rays (*zer*) and its activities (*rtsal*) as the creative Kun-tu bzang-po (*sprul ba*).[26] Thus the implication of the three modes of being (*sku gsum*) within the Primordial Basis is discernible. It is Kun-tu bzang-po when the *gzhi* is described as the grand-father (*spyi mes*) or Kun-tu bzang-mo for the primeval grand-mother (*ye phyi mo*). With the use of the name Kun-tu bzang-po for the *gzhi* there developed the theme of a theory and practice termed *kun tu bzang po'i lta spyod*. While the theory of Kun-tu bzang-po here refers to the *gzhi*, the practice is the soteriological aspect of the doctrine. Much emphasis is laid upon the importance of keeping both the theory and practice side by side (*lta spyod ya ma bral ba*).[27]

## The conception of kun-gzhi in rDzogs chen

The acceptance of the theory of the *kun gzhi rnam shes* (*ālayavijñāna*) by the different Buddhist philosophical schools is a subject of debate among the Tibetan scholastics. According to the Jo nang pa, not only the Vijñānavāda, but also the Madhyamaka school and the tantras admit the *kun gzhi rnam shes*.[28] However the dGe lugs pa holds that the only school which admits *kun gzhi rnam shes* is the Vijñānavāda.[29] However that may be, the term *kun gzhi* just by itself occurs in rDzogs chen works referring to the Primordial Basis. In the introductory note of the *sBas pa'i rgum chung* of the Tun-huang document, it is used to designate *boddhicitta* and described as "pure space" (*mkha' dbyings rnam par dag pa*).[30] In *SM* it is mentioned only once, but significantly in connection with the *gzhi* appearing as *kun gzhi byang chub kyi sems*, "the thought of enlightenment, the basis of all". This restricted use of the word *kun gzhi* in these works seems to be an indication that the term did not have in early times the full connotation of the theory of *ālayavijñāna*, but was simply used in the sense of the actual term, *kun gzhi*, the "basis of all", for to apply the term *kun gzhi rnam shes* to the Primordial Basis would be contradictory to the view according

tu bzang-po are mentioned by Klong-chen rab-'byams, *Tshig don mdzod*, f. 4b, 6.
[25] See p. 52.
[26] *RK* p. 121–2–6.
[27] See pp. 55, 143–144.
[28] *RCh* ff. 109b,4; 111a,5.
[29] *BNy* f. 516: *rgya gar grub mtha' bzhi'i nang nas kun gzhi 'dod mkhan sems tsam kho na yin la/* Cf. *ShT* p. 553.
[30] See p. 70.

to which the *gzhi* is totally pure from the very beginning (*ka dag*). Here it must be recalled that the author of *SM* seems to have some reservation concerning rDzogs chen's affinity to the Vijñānavāda doctrines, for he has tried to link the Cig car ba tradition to this school somewhat disparagingly.[31]

In his *ThCh*, Rong-zom makes an attempt to resolve the question of whether the Primordial Basis is identical with *kun gzhi rnam shes* which further confirms the existence of the problem from quite early on. He states that in "the system of the Lower Vehicles, the definition of *kun gzhi* is that it is that which remains as the essence of the cause and effect of all saṃsāric elements like a medicine that can remain in a "vase of poisons". In the system of the Higher Vehicles, the definition of *kun gzhi* is that from the very beginning the nature of the essence of *bodhi* is undefiled. This is called *bodhicitta*, "the basis of all". The passions and the traces (*vāsanā*) that cause birth in bad places are of adventitious obscurity, like a piece of gold covered with oxide or a precious gem enveloped in mud. It is only that their qualities are invisible, not their real nature debased (*theg pa 'og ma ba'i tshul gyis/ kun gzhi'i mtshan nyid ni zag pa dang bcas pa'i chos thams cad kyi rgyu dang 'bras bu'i ngo bor gnas shing smin pa yin pas/ shing thog smin pa dang 'dra la/ zag pa med pa rnams kyi ni rten dang gnas tsam yin te/ dug gi bum pa'i nang na sman gnas pa lta bu'o/ zhes bshad/ theg pa gong ma'i tshul las ni/ kun gzhi'i mtshan nyid ni gdod ma nas byang chub kyi snying po'i rang bzhin du dag pa yin pas kun gzh'i byang chub kyi sems zhes bya la/ nyon mongs pa dang gnas ngan len gyi bag chags ni blo(glo) bur gyi dri ma ste gser g.yas g.yogs pa'am/ nor bu rin po che 'dam du bsubs pa bzhin yon tan cung zad mi snang bar zad de/ rang bzhin nyams par byas pa med do/*).[32]

This explanation of Rong-zom confirms the fact that in rDzogs chen, the actual conception of *kun gzhi rnam shes* as held by the Vijñānavāda school is not considered to be identical with the Primordial Basis. As is suggested above, the term *kun gzhi* is therefore used in a different sense from the doctrine of the Vijñānavāda though there is no doubt that the term is borrowed from it.[33] A similar view is held by Dol-bu-pa Shes-rab rgyal-mtshan (1292–1361). The Jo nang pa according to him holds two

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[31] Nevertheless, the rDzogs chen doctrine is considered to be affiliated to *cittamātra* by certain segments of the orthodox sects, e.g. Sa-paṇ Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (*RS* p. 83): *sems phyogs phal cher sems tsam gyi/ lta bar 'chad po de dag gis/* . . .

[32] *ThCh* ff. 137b, 6–38a, 4.

[33] The sources of the borrowing are probably sūtras like the *Laṅkāvatāra* (*K* Vol. 29, No. 775, pp. 62–2–3 et seq) and the *Ghanavyūha* (No. 778, p. 157–2–1) both identify *ālayavijñāna* with *tathāgatagarbha*, but neither of them are acknowledged as the principal authorities in rDzogs chen. On the other hand, in rDzogs chen the theory of *tathāgatagarbha* is to some degree accepted, but it is only a later innovation. For a detailed discussion of this topic see, D.S. Ruegg 1969, p. 404 et seq.

different aspects of *kun gzhi*: one is its transcendental aspect (*ye shes*) whilst the other is its phenomenal aspect (*rnam shes*).[34]

However, discussing the differences between the conceptions of *kun gzhi* and *chos sku*, Klong-chen rab-'byams remarks that in certain sūtras and tantras the basis (*gzhi*) is given the name of *kun gzhi* from the viewpoint of it being a basis and this has been a source of misunderstanding for many. They therefore say that *kun gzhi* and *chos sku* are identical. If that is so, *kun gzhi* is the root of *saṃsāra* and it contains the saṃsāric traces (*bag chags*) and therefore *chos sku* would have to be admitted as having *bag chags* also (*mdo rgyud kha cig tu gzhi'i cha la kun gzhir ming btags pa dgongs pa ma long pa kha cig de gnyis gcig tu 'dod pa yod de shin tu nor sa kham po che yin pas skyon du ma yod de/ kun gzhi bag chags dang bcas pa'i phyir chos sku bag chags dang bcas par thal ba dang . . ./*).[35]

Klong-chen rab-'byams further emphatically denies when speaking of the level of the goal realisation (*'bras bu*) that the "Awareness that originates in oneself" (*rang byung ye shes*) has anything to do with the "Non-dichotomic intellect" (*gzung 'dzin gnyis med kyi ye shes*) of the Vijñānavāda.[36]

We have therefore two examples of denying that rDzogs chen has any doctrinal and philosophical affinity to the Vijñānavāda school either at the level of starting point (*gzhi*) or even at the level of the goal (*'bras bu*). Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that the doctrine of *kun gzhi* established itself in rDzogs chen from quite early on if it was not the actual source of the development of the concept of the Primordial Basis. The borrowing of the concept of *kun gzhi* is particularly marked in the rDzogs chen of the Bonpo. Already in texts like *rTse mo byung rgyal* not only the term *kun gzhi* but *kun gzhi rnam shes* itself frequently occurs in the rDzogs chen context.[37] rDzogs chen's dependence on the Vijñānavāda doctrine becomes more marked in later literature. The *Kun tu bzang po ye shes klong gi rgyud* by 'Jigs-med gling-pa (1729–1798) is perhaps the best example of

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[34] *RCh* ff. 84b,3, 199b,2: *kun gzhi la ye shes dang rnam shes su 'byed pa . . ./*; Paṇ-chen Śākya mchog-ldan also maintains that *kun gzhi* has two parts: *rnam smin kyi cha* and *ye shes kyi cha* (*ShT* p. 554). According to him, it is the *kun gzhi ye shes* which is called rDzogs chen by the rNying ma pa: *'khor ba byed po kun gzhi yi/ rnam shes nyid las gzhan du med/ myang 'das byed po kun gzhi yi/ ye shes nyid yin de yi mtshon/ gab pa mngon pa phyung ba dang/ rdzogs pa chen po zhes su btags/*(*RS* pp. 78, 280). Cf. also Mi-bskyod rdo-rje, *rJe ye bzang rtse ba'i rgyud gsum gsang ba dang pan chen śākya mchog ldan gyi sde(bde) mchog rnam bshad gnyis kyi mthar thug gi 'bras bu gzhi dus kyi gnas lugs/ lam dus kyi rnal 'byor rnams la dpyad pa bdud rtsi'i dri mchog, rNal 'byor rgyud kyi rnam bshad*, Vol. 3, ff. 321, 328. See also *gNas lugs bdud rtsi'i nying khu* by the author in the same volume, f. 346.

[35] *Tshig don mdzod*, f. 52b,3; *Theg mchog mdzod*, f. 299a5 et seq; *Sems nyid bsdus pa'i sgron ma* (*Bi ma snying thig*, Delhi 1971, Vol. 7, Part I, pp. 606–7).

[36] *Chos dbyings mdzod*, f. 76a,5; *Grub mtha' mdzod*, f. 167b,3; *BNy* pp. 275–76.

[37] ff. 436, 438. This is one of the eighteen Sems sde texts, see p. 24.

a work on rDzogs chen philosophy in which the fusion of the doctrine of the Vijñānavāda and rDzogs chen reaches its most characteristic elaboration.[38]

We now come to the question why is it that the rDzogs chen philosophers like Klong-chen rab-'byams are so reluctant to admit that the Primordial Basis is identical in nature to *kun gzhi* in spite of the early sources which use it to designate it? The problem may well be illustrated by the critical question of Mi-bskyod rdo-rje, the VIIIth Karma-pa (1507–1554) and the reply given to it by Sog-zlog-pa Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (1552–1624):

> "In your system, you say that you would admit the fact that the 'basis' is pure from the beginning (*ka dag*), and from the beginning it is enlightened (*ye grol*).[39] According to your system, is *ka dag* identical to *kun gzhi* or is it different from *kun gzhi*? If they are identical to each other, *kun gzhi* is the universal basis of both *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, because in it innate nescience exists and since that is the root of all nescience, this *kun gzhi* carries no sense of being *ka dag*, and *ye grol*. If *ka dag* and *kun gzhi* are not the same and widely different, which one comes first, *ka dag* or *kun gzhi*? If *ka dag* is the first, it is inadmissable to both scripture and reasoning, for *kun gzhi* is the true existence of the primordial state which is far from having fallen partially either into the *saṃsāra* or *nirvāṇa*. There is no other (ontological state) higher than *kun gzhi*. If *kun gzhi* is the first, in that case (as stated before) it cannot be pure nor enlightened from the beginning, because nescience is innate in it. Therefore, the so-called *ka dag* is a name given to that (conception) of those Bon works according to which there is first the state of primeval voidness, from which (the world) comes into existence gradually. You refer to this as the basis of the errancy of *saṃsāra*" (*khyed rnams kyi lugs la gzhi ka dag dang ye grol du 'dod zer ba/ khyed rang gi lugs la ka dag dang kun gzhi gag gam tha dad/ gcig na kun gzhi 'khor 'das nyis kyi spyi gzhi yin pa'i don gyi(s) lhan cig skyes pa'i ma rig pa yod la/ de ma rig pa thams cad kyi rtsa ba yin pas ka nas dag pa dang ye grol gyi don ma tshang/ kun gzhi dang ka dag gnyis mi gcig tha dad na/ ka dag dang kun gzhi thog mar gang snga/ ka dag snga na/ dang po ka dag la rjes zhig nas kun gzhi'i gnas lugs su byung ba ni lung rig gi ngos nas kyang mi 'thad de/ kun gzhi ni 'khor 'das kyi phyogs su ma lhung ba'i gdod ma'i gnas lugs yin la/ de'i gong na gang med pas so/ kun gzhi snga na ka dag dang ye grol du mi 'gyur bas/ de bas na ka dag ces pa ni bon gyi gzhung na/ dang po ye med du 'dod pa ka dag dang de las ye yod cung zad srid pa la ma rtogs pa 'khor ba'i 'khrul gzhi zhes ming 'dogs bsgyur ba yin mod/*).[40]

The reply of Sog-zlog-pa:

> "The essence of *kun gzhi* is non-composite, inexpressible, self-existent, not leaning towards any side. When we call it the pure and enlightened basis, we mean the Buddha Kun-tu bzang-po who on this very basis attained self-

[38] *Klong chen snying thig*, Vol. III (H.V. Guenther, "Indian Buddhist thought in Tibetan perspective", *History of Religions*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1963).
[39] For this see p. 189.
[40] *LB* pp. 79–80.

> realisation. We do not hold that *kun gzhi* is pure from the beginning (*ka dag*) and enlightened from the beginning (*ye grol*). *Ka dag* means that which is pure from the beginning and has never experienced errancy. The definition of Kun-tu bzang-po is that one who at no time has ever experienced errancy, hence he is called "Good". The statement about the "pure and enlightened basis" is to be recognised as referring to the "basis for releasing" (*grol gzhi*) and not *kun gzhi*. Here, *kun gzhi* is the mind (*sems*) and the *grol gzhi* is the intellection (*rig pa*). *Kun gzhi* and *ka dag* are neither the same nor different" (*kun gzhi zhes pa'i ngo bo ni/ 'dus ma byas brjod du med pa'i rang byung phyogs gang gi yang ma lhung ba yin la/ de la gzhi ka dag dang ye grol ces pa rgyal ba kun tu bzang po gzhi de nyid kyi thog tu rang grol ba la zer ba yin gyi/ kun gzhi nyid ka dag dang ye grol du 'dod pa ma yin no/ de'i phyir ka nas dag pa zhes bya ba gdod ma nas 'khrul ma myong ba'i dag pa de la zer la/ kun tu bzang po zhes pa'i sgra don ni dus kun tu 'khrul pas nam yang gos ma myong ba de'i phyir bzang po zhes bya ba/ 'di'i lugs la 'chad pa yin zhing/ye grol zhes pa yang de dang don gcig pa yin pas na gzhan du mi bsam mo/ de'i phyir 'dir gzhi ka dag dang ye grol zhes gsungs pa grol gzhi la ngos 'dzin pa yin gyi kun gzhi la 'dod pa ma yin no/ 'dir kun gzhi sems yin la/ grol gzhi rig pa yin pa de'i phyir/ kun gzhi dang ka dag gnyis gcig dang tha dad gang yang ma yin no/*).[41]

It is apparent from Sog-zlog-pa's reply that he does not admit the fact that the Primordial Basis is identical to *kun gzhi* which for him as for Mi-bskyod rdo-rje, stands for *ālayavijñāna*, as it does for Klong-chen rab-'byams, and is therefore impure. Sog-zlog-pa's reply illustrates the dilemma with which the rNying ma pa faces and this is clear when he says in the same reply that *ka dag* and *kun gzhi* are born together and one does not precede the other, like an egg and a bird (*ka dag dang kun gzhi la snga phyi med de lhan cig skyes pa yin pas na bya dang sgong nga lta bu ste/ bya med na sgong nga mi 'byung zhing/ sgong nga med na bya mi 'byung bas rang bzhin gyi lhan cig skyes pa yin no/*).[42]

Sog-zlog-pa's reply amounts to a riddle and does not actually contribute much in solving the fundamental question which intrigued the VIIIth Karma-pa so much. In short, it is this: is the *kun gzhi ab aeterno* pure from the very beginning? For Mi-bskyod rdo-rje, there is no distinction whatsoever between the mere *kun gzhi* and *kun gzhi rnam shes* as in all the gSar ma pa schools except the Jo nang pa. *Kun gzhi* is therefore inseparable from the conception of *ālayavijñāna*, the ground where one leaves one's traces (*bag chags*). This conception is directly connected with the Buddhist doctrine according to which *saṃsāra* cannot have a starting point and consequently they cannot admit the existence of a genetic state, pure and unadulterated. Certain dGe lugs pa masters, for example, dKon-mchog bstan-pa'i sgron-me, while wholly accepting a certain trend of the rDzogs chen

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41 *Ibid.*, pp. 80–81.
42 *Ibid.*, p. 83.

teaching, states politely that "he does not understand" how the Great Perfection is proved to be pure from the beginning as the rNying ma pa maintain.[43] The question therefore remains unresolved as far as the rNying ma pa and their opponents are concerned. However, it is in a Bonpo work that a plausible solution seems to have been offered to this ontological problem which has been the focus of debate for centuries.

> "Some people doubt that if *kun gzhi* is pure from the beginning, it cannot be accepted as the ground on which one accumulates one's impressions (*bag chags*), but if it is the ground for storing the *bag chags*, it cannot be pure from the beginning.
>
> The essence of *kun gzhi* at no time has ever experienced being defiled by the *bag chags* since it is absolutely pure from the beginning. In that case, one might think that it cannot be the 'ground' for storing the *bag chags*. However, the *bag chags* are stored there only through the 'co-ordination' of all the eight kinds of consciousness. *Kun gzhi* is therefore merely the ground for storing the *bag chags*. It is like a treasury.
>
> Although in the sphere of space, many a world came into existence and remains, the essence of space remains undefiled by the dirt of the world, even a particle of it" (*gang zag 'gas kun gzhi ye nas ka dag yin na/ bag chags sog gzhi yin par mi 'thad snyam nas the tshom za ba la/ kun gzhi ngo bo la dus gsum du bag chags kyis dri mas gos ma myong bas ka dag yin no/ 'o na bag chags sog gzhi ma yin snyam na/ bag chags ni rnam par shes pa tshogs brgyad zung du 'brel ba'i bag la sog pa yin no/ de yang kun gzhi ni bag chags sog pa'i gzhi tsam yin te dper na mdzod khang dang 'dra/ . . . nam mkha'i klong du snang srid ji snyad cig chags shing gnas kyang/ nam mkha'i ngo bo la snang srid kyi dri mas rdul tsam yang ma gos pa bzhin no/*).[44]

Two points stand out from this argument: first, *kun gzhi* remains pure until the storing of the *bag chags* takes place and that happens only through "co-ordination" with the eight kinds of consciousness just as a treasury remains empty until the treasure is placed in it. Second: *kun gzhi* remains pure even though the *bag chags* is stored just as the space remains clean even though it contains the world.

For the Bonpo, *kun gzhi* is therefore *ab aeterno*, pure from the beginning, and can also be the ground for storing the *bag chags*. The question of nescience which is innate within *kun gzhi* for the Buddhists does not arise for the Bonpo till the "co-ordination" of all the consciousness begins and once this begins *kun gzhi* then becomes *kun gzhi rnam shes* (*ālayavijñāna*), the veritable saṃsāric ground. However, it goes without saying that the whole theory is borrowed from the Buddhists, but the borrowing must have

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[43] *ZhL* p. 582: *rdzogs chen zhes pa dri ma thams cad dang bral ba'i sems ma bcos gsal la hrig ge ba 'di yin zhing/ snang srid 'khor 'das thams cad 'di'i nang du rdzogs pa dang 'di las gzhan du grol byed kyi thabs med pas na chen po bshad 'dug kyang dri ma thams cad dang bral lugs ji ltar yin ma shes/* Cf. also dPal-mang dKon-mchog rgyal-mtshan, *Bla ma mchod pa dang 'brel ba'i phyag chen khrid kyi zin bris dran pa'i gdung sel, The Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 284.

[44] *Kun gzhi zhal shes gsal ba'i sgron ma, ZhNy* Tsa, p. 427.

taken place in a period going back to at least the eleventh century since the Bonpo argument to some degree agrees with the position of the early philosophers of rDzogs chen who as we have seen seem to make a distinction between a mere *kun gzhi* and *kun gzhi rnam shes* and so avoid the vicious circle of the argument of the later rNying ma pa and their critics.

Moreover, the Bonpo seem to have taken a further step in developing the conception of *kun gzhi*. They make a distinction between the "*kun gzhi* of the static principle" (*gnas pa don gyi kun gzhi*) designating a kind of universal and genetic state pervading the whole universe and the "*kun gzhi* of mentality" (*shes rig rgyud kyi kun gzhi*) which is the Primordial Basis existing individually in living beings.[45] The first one corresponds to the "Universal Mind" (*spyi sems*) of the *Gab pa dgu skor*.[46]

### bDe gshegs snying po[47] in rDzogs chen

In the early rDzogs chen texts like the Tun-hunang documents, no reference is made to *bde gshegs snying po* in connection with the Primordial Basis. However, it is mentioned in *SM*, but only once in a quotation from the *Srog gi 'khor lo* and it is mentioned in the *Byang sems bde ba'i myu gu*, both these last works belong to the group of the eighteen Sems sde texts.[48] In his *KC*, Rong-zom too uses it for designating the *gzhi*, but does not mention it in his *ThCh*. It is attested in a work of Rog Shes-rab-'od (1166–1244)[49] and later becomes predominant theme particularly in the works of Klong-chen rab-'byams on rDzogs chen. Later the Bonpo too have taken it as a name of the *gzhi*.[50] Klong-chen rab-'byams's stand on the theory of *tathāgatagarbha* is as one would expect identical to that of Dol-bu-pa.[51] He regards the ten sūtras[52] which treat the theory as belonging to the Third Cycle of *Dharma* (*chos 'khor*). Moreover, he rejects the criticism made against the doctrine according to which *tathāgatagarbha* is present in every living being having all the characteristic qualities of a Buddha.[53] Here suffice it to say that Klong-chen rab-'byams differs however from Dol-bu-pa when he elaborates the rDzogs chen philosophy within the framework of the three axes, *viz.* the ground of the starting point (*gzhi*),

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[45] U-ri bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan, *sGron ma'i 'grel ba nyi 'od rgyan, ZhNy* Ba, p. 305.
[46] f. 76a (Karmay 1977, No. 52).
[47] The usual Sanskrit equivalent is thought to be *sugatagarbha*. However, it is known that the term is not attested in Buddhist works written in Sanskrit (Ruegg 1973, p. 68, n. 2).
[48] See p. 24. For the second text see Kaneko No. 10,6.
[49] *TG* f. 113b,1,2.
[50] Shar-rdza bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan, *dByings rig mdzod*, pp. 11–18.
[51] Cf. Ruegg 1969, pp. 2–6.
[52] For references of these sūtras, see Ruegg 1969, p. 4, n. 1.
[53] *Tshig don mdzod*, ff. 40a, 6–44a,6; *Grub mtha' mdzod*, f. 185a,6.

the process of spiritual development (*lam*) and the resulting goal (*'bras bu*).[54] He makes a clear distinction between when *bder gshegs snying po* is as the *gzhi* and when it is the *'bras bu*. On the other hand, Dol-bu-pa maintains the doctrine of the "indifferentiation between the basis and the result" (*gzhi 'bras dbyer med*).[55]

### The Primordial Basis as having a physical presentation

In the early texts on rDzogs chen no physical presentation of any kind is made of the Primordial Basis apart from the symbolical name, Kun-tu bzang-po which we have already discussed. However, certain rDzogs chen tantras whose precise dates mostly remain uncertain (but they are of rather late origin) describe the absolute aspect of the *sems* (*sems kyi chos nyid*, hence *chos sku*) as if it were an actual person. The theory of *tathāgatagarbha* present in living beings with all the characteristic qualities (*mtshan dpe*) of a Buddha and that of Kun-tu bzang-po who expounds the rDzogs chen tantras presupposes nevertheless the notion of the *gzhi* with a physical form. Thus in tantras chiefly connected with rDzogs chen, the *gzhi* is conceived as having a form which resembles a vase and its intellect is likened to a butter-lamp placed in the vase and its luminosity, the light of the butter-lamp. The overall presentation of the three components, *viz*. the body, its intellect and light is in the form of a "light ball" (*'od kyi gong bu*). The components are on the top of each other (*gsum brtsegs*).[56] This effulgent body knows no old age, hence its name "The Young Vase-like Body" (*gzhon nu bum sku*).[57] We shall return to this subject below.

As in the case of *tathāgatagarbha* of the Jo nang pa, this body too is adorned with all the characteristic marks (*mtshan dpe*) of a Buddha. As the *garuḍa* when still in the egg has already developed its wings and other parts of its body so is *chos sku* in us.[58] In rDzogs chen, *dharmakāya* is not always presented as absolutely formless and totally inaccessible.

A sharp distinction is made between the conception of the *sems* and that of *ye shes*. Unlike the other Buddhist schools, rDzogs chen maintains the *sems* and *ye shes* to have different functions. The *sems* is characterised

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[54] *Sems dang ye shes gyi dris lan*, p. 390; *BNy* p. 287.

[55] *RCh* ff. 23a,3–4, 113b,4.

[56] rDo-rje gling-pa, *lTa ba klong yangs*, (Kaneko, No. 65): *rig pa'i sku ni bum sku 'dra/ye shes bum nang mar me 'dra/ 'od zer mar me('i) 'od dang 'dra/gnas tshul 'od kyi gong bu bzhugs/ sku dang ye shes 'od dang gsum/gsum brtsegs su bzhugs/* (f. 262).

[57] *Thig le kun gsal chen po'i rgyud* (Kaneko, No. 81): *snying po sku lnga nang nas gsal bas bum pa'i sku/ bgres pa mi mnga' bas gzhon nu'o/* (f. 133). Cf. also *lTa ba klong yangs*, f. 191.

[58] *lTa baye shes gting rdzogs kyi rgyud* (Kaneko No. 43): *sangs rgyas yon tan mtshan dang dpe dpyad ste/ . . . dus ni da lta byung ba lus kyi(s) sgribs/ dper na khyung chen sgong nga'i nang na gshog rgyas kyang/ sgo nga ma chag 'phur mi nus pa bzhin/* (f. 52).

as consisting of different mental components and is basically dualistic in relation to its perception (*gnyis 'dzin gyi rtog pa can*), and above all it is the root of the phenomenal world. The *ye shes*, on the other hand, is non-composite, intrinsic, pure from the beginning and luminous, a cognition that does not perceive any false object and is free from dichotomic diversification (*gnyis snang gi spros pa dang bral ba*). Here the term has the connotation of its literal meaning: "primeval intellect" (*ye nas shes pa*). The *sems* dwells in *kun gzhi* whereas *ye shes* in *chos sku*. Klong-chen rab-'byams emphasises that it is as important in rDzogs chen to grasp the distinction between these two as it is in the case of *kun gzhi* and *chos sku*.[59]

Certain late rNying ma pa tantras even go further in localizing the *sems* and *ye shes* in the body. *Ye shes* resides in the heart whereas *sems* is in the lung.[60] This notion is particularly repugnant to the critics of rDzogs chen. dPal-mang dKon-mchog rgyal-mtshan remarks that the idea of a living being (*sems can*) present in the lung and a Buddha in the heart of a person is a doctrine worse than the theory of the "void of others (*gzhan stong*) of the Jo nang pa".[61] He wonders if this idea originates in Bon, because Thu-kvan Chos-kyi Nyi-ma believed that the doctrines of Bon and rDzogs chen have an "intimate relationship" (*thugs snang gshin pa yod pa*).[62] However, no instance of this particular idea has been found in the

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[59] *Theg mchog mdzod*, f. 304b,3; *Tshig don mdzod*, ff. 55b,6–59b,1.

[60] *lTa ba klong yangs*, ff. 221, 256–57; Cf. *NgD* p. 324; *GLZ* f. 25b,3.

[61] *Zab don snyan rgyud kyi gcod gzhung zab mo gcod kyi man ngag blo gros mig 'byed* (p. 517).

The theory of *gzhan stong* was mainly formulated by Dol-bu-pa Shes-rab rgyal-mtshan (1292–1361) in his *RCh* (especially f. 96a et seq). According to him, it is the central doctrine expounded in the *Mahāyānottaratantra* (*T* Vol. 108, No. 5525). The theory is closely related to that of *tathāgatagarbha* of the Jo nang pa. According to them, the *tathāgatagarbha* is "devoid of other elements" (*chos gzhan gyis stong pa*), i.e. devoid of all other heterogeneous elements, but substantial in itself. Cf. Go-ram-pa bSod-nams seng-ge (1429–1489), *lTa ba'i shan 'byed theg mchog gnad kyi zla zer SK* Vol. 13, No. 47, p. 1–4–4); Ngag-dbang chos-grags (1572–1641), *Grub mtha' shan 'byed* (f. 117a,4): *don dam bden pa'i bde gshegs snying po ni gzhan kun rdzob kyi chos kyis stong gi/ don dam rang gi ngo bos mi stong ste/ . . . rgyu mtshan 'di la brten nas gzhan stong pa'i ming 'dogs byung/*

The *gzhan stong* theory is opposed to what is known as *rang stong*, "devoid of its own existence", the *śūnyatā* theory of the Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka and is considered to be simply nihilistic by the Jo nang pa and certain masters of the bKa' gdams pa, e.g. Phya-pa Chos-kyi seng-ge (d. 1169, *BA* p. 334). However, the *gzhan stong* theory came to be regarded as reflecting non-Buddhist influence, especially the Grangs can pa (Sāṃkhya) and was the object of much criticism by many, particularly Red-mda'-ba gZhon-nu blo-gros (15th cent.) (Śākya mchog-ldan, *dBu ma'i byung tshul rnam par bshad pa'i gtam yid bzhin lhun po*, pp. 234–35) and his disciple Tsong-kha-pa in *Drang nges legs bshad snying po* (*T* Vol. 153, No. 6142). Tsong-kha-pa took up the *rang stong* theory as his principal philosophical doctrine. The dGe lugs pa have consequently been much averse to the *gzhan stong* theory. Cf. *ShT* pp. 477 et seq; Longdol Lama Ngag-dbang blo-bzang (1719–1805), *Bod gangs can gyi lta ba'i grub mtha' rags rim ngo sprod* (*The Collected Works, SPS* Vol. 100). Cf. also D.S. Ruegg 1973, pp. 60, 325 et seq.

[62] *Blo gros mig 'byed*, p. 518; *Grub mtha' thams cad kyi khung dang 'dod tshul ston pa shel gyi me long*, part I, p. 265.

Bonpo rDzogs chen works so far available although the relationship between the two is very close. According to other rNying ma pa tantras,[63] however, the *sems* is not present in the lung but in between the lung and the heart. Klong-chen rab-'byams has given this version in his *Tshig don mdzod*.[64]

The notion of the *gzhi* consisting of different components, *viz. sku, ye shes* and *'od* is further elaborated by placing them separately in the following ways: the *gzhon nu bum sku* is present in the heart, its intellect is in the brain, the conch-shell house (*dung khang*) and its light shines forth through the eyes. The *gzhon nu bum sku* is as small as a mustard seed and is in the middle of lights of five colours in the form of a closed charm-box in the heart. Its eyes are as big as a *phul thag*.[65] To this theory, the practices of the rDzogs chen neophytes known as the "retreat into the darkness" (*mun mtshams*) and the "clear light" (*'od gsal*) are directly connected. When practised, the former involves shutting oneself up in the darkness for a long period and the latter watching the sun light in various difficult postures. Both practices are so to speak aimed at perceiving the light of one's intellect. The theory of the "Rainbow Body" (*'ja' lus*) is very closely related to the notion of the light of *gzhon nu bum sku* which will be dealt with below.

Although the notion of the luminous body (*'od lus*) comes probably from the theory of the natural luminosity of the mind (*sems kyi rang bzhin 'od gsal ba*) which goes back a long way in the history in Buddhist texts and is particularly associated with the doctrines of the Vijñānavāda,[66] the rDzogs chen critics nevertheless express much doubt about the genuineness of these rDzogs chen thoughts. It is true that in the early texts, for example, the Tun-huang documents and *SM*, there are no instances of detailed discussion containing physical description of the *gzhi*. Most of the tantras, which contain the above accounts are of *gter ma* origin, belonging to the "re-discoveries" of lCe-btsun Seng-ge dbang-phyug (second half of

[63] *Rig pa rang shar gyi rgyud*, Kaneko No. 153, f. 98; *rDo rje sems dpa' snying gi me long gi rgyud*, Kaneko No. 156, f. 544.

[64] f. 60b.

[65] *rDo rje sems dpa' snying gi me long gi rgyud*, Kaneko No. 156, ff. 542–43. The sense of the term *phul thag* which occurs in the phrase *sku yungs 'bru tsam la spyan phul thag tsam* is not clear. Klong-chen rab-'byams rejects a suggestion according to which it means the "eyes are bigger than the body and, though the root is narrow, the top is wide" (*sku bas spyan che ste rtsa ba phra yang rtse mo yangs pa*). According to Klong-chen rab-'byams himself, it is an old local dialect word (*yul skad rnying pa*) and used as *phul thag tsam* which means *'tshams pa*, "proportional". Therefore the eyes should be even smaller than the tip of a hair in proportion to the body which is like a mustard seed (*yungs 'bru la 'tshams pa'i spyan de skra rtse bas kyang chung dgos*), *Tshig don mdzod*, ff. 52a,2, 63a,4–6.

[66] On this conception in general, see Ruegg 1969, p. 411 et seq.

the eleventh century). Other tantras which deal with the same subject date even later, for example, the *lTa ba klong yangs* which was "rediscovered" by rDo-rje gling-pa. Therefore it belongs to the fourteenth century. This *gter ston* moreover is very much connected with the Bonpo rDzogs chen tradition and is often known under his Bonpo name, Bon-zhig g.Yung-drung gling-pa. There is ample evidence that the borrowings between the two have been very frequent and this must be considered as normal practice since both traditions share the rDzogs chen teaching even though they may sometimes be reluctant to acknowledge the borrowings from each other.[67]

Consequently the rDzogs chen critics invariably suspect that such practices as those mentioned above and the question of a luminous microcosmic body present in living beings originates in a doctrine non-Buddhist, if not Bon. Thus Mi-bskyod rdo-rje remarks that the rNying ma pa holds that the "noumenal aspect of the mind" (*sems nyid*) resides in the heart in the form of coloured light and so they contemplate the sun rays. There is hardly any difference between this doctrine and that of the Eternalist (*rtag lta ba*) according to which the *ātman* is present in the heart as a light as big as an egg or as small as a mustard seed.[68] The practice, he continues, of the rNying ma pa is closely identical to that of the Bonpo who have many percepts for looking at the lights" (*snying nang na sems nyid 'od*

[67] Cf. p. 219.

[68] In fact, not all the rTag lta ba (*śāśvatavāda*) hold the same view of the *ātman*. The allusion is therefore imprecise. In his *Mu stegs kyi grub mtha' tshar gcod gtan tshigs thigs pa'i rig pa smra ba'i mdo 'grel rno ngar rig pa'i thog chen*, the Bonpo author sGa-ston Shes-rab 'od-zer (c. 15th) gives an account of what is known as the "Nine groups of the Eternalists" (*rtag lta sde dgu*) and one of them is called bDag nyid che btsun(?) which holds a similar view of the *ātman* (f. 17b,1): *nga'am bdag de gnas gang na yod na/ sems can thams cad kyi snying gi dkyil na yod do/ ming gang yin na/ bdag rtag pa zhes bya'o/ che chung bong tshad ci tsam yod ce na/ lus che ba len pa'i gnas skabs 'ga' zhig tu che ste/ che bar 'gyur ba'i tshe na theb chung tsam mo/ lus chung ba len pa'i gnas skabs 'ga' zhig tu chung ste/ chung ba'i dus na yungs kar (dkar) tsam zhig yod de/ 'di ni che chung gi tshad bstan to/ kha dog bstan pa ni/ kha dog ji lta bu zhig yod na/ dkar la 'tsher ba zhig yod de/ rang bzhin ji lta bu zhig yod na/ snum la 'dril ba shel sgong yongs su dag pa'i rang bzhin lta bu zhig yod do/* – "The place of the self is the middle of the heart of all living beings, and its name is the 'Eternal self'. Its size is large and becomes like a little finger when the body is big, and is small and becomes like a white mustard seed when the body is small. As for the colour, it is white and shining, and its texture is smooth and round like that of a polished crystal ball."

According to Ngag-dbang chos-grags, it is the gCer bu pa (Nirgrantha) which holds such a view of the *ātman: mu stegs gcer bu pa sems can gyi snying gi dkyil na bdag shes rig gi skyes bu dkar la 'tshor ('tsher) ba snum la 'dril ba yod par 'dod pa . ./* (*BT* f. 120b,6). However, according to Klong-chen rab-'byams, it is the Grangs can pa (Sāṃkhya) who hold this view (*Grub mtha' mdzod*, f. 44a,4). The Vedānta and the Jaina also hold a similar view, cf. 'Jam-dbyangs bzhad-pa (1648–1722), *Grub mtha' chen mo*, section Ka, ff. 38a,7, 62b,1; dKon-mchog 'jigs-med dbang-po (1728–1791), *Grub mtha'i rnam bzhag rin chen phreng ba* (Mimaki 1977, p. 73).

*lnga'i rnam pa 'dzin pa 'di dang/ rtag lta ba bdag lta ba bza' ba po byed pa po rang dbang can gyi sems zhig rnam pa snying nang na 'od che sgo nga tsam/ chung ste yung 'bru tsam zhig yod par 'dzin pa ni khyad par kyang ma mchis/ . . . des na 'di dag ni bon chos rnams na 'od la lta ba'i gdams pa mang po zhig . . . khyad cung zad kyang ma mchis so/*).[69]

## The Primordial Basis as the basis for releasing oneself (grol gzhi) and as the genetic state from which one strays ('khrul gzhi).[70]

The implications of the notions of *grol gzhi* and *'khrul gzhi* are discernible in *SM* in the context of the theory of the *gzhi* itself, but the terms as such are not yet used there. The term *grol gzhi* designates the soteriological aspect of the *gzhi*: it is to this very basis that one has the chance to return if one must; in other words, one attains Enlightenment only if and when one arrives back where one has been originally and was from the beginning enlightened (*ye grol*).[71] The notion of the Primeval Buddha (*thog ma'i sangs rgyas* = *ādibuddha*) primarily comes out of the *grol gzhi* theory. This Buddha attained Enlightenment so to speak without having laboured for the cause like other Buddhas, but simply recognised the state of the "self-intellect" (*rang rig*). The term *rang rig* in rDzogs chen refers to *ye shes* which we have already met. It is a term borrowed again from Vijñānavāda school and is an abridged form of the phrase *rang gis rang rig pa*, literally "self seeing oneself".[72] What is realised is nothing else but experiencing the self within the *grol gzhi*. This apperception is symbolically called Ādi-buddha. However, if this introversive cognition does not recognise itself (*rang gis rang ma rig pa*) and begins to perceive its own state as something apart, it begins to create erroneously a dichotomic appearance (*gnyis 'dzin gyi snang ba*) for itself which then causes it to stray from its own primordial purity. This is the conception of the beginning of the *saṃsāra*. The beginning is described as follows:

> "The immovable moved slightly,
> The unquivering quivered slightly.
> Although there is no motion in the Basis,
> The motion comes out of the versatility of the Intellect.
> This versatility is called the Mind.

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[69] *LB* p. 85.
[70] *Tshig don mdzod*, f. 17a,6.
[71] *Ibid.*, f. 13b,1. Other similar terms are also used: *rang grol, gcer grol, mtha' grol* and *gcig grol*. The use of these terms has been an object of criticism, Cf. Ngag-dbang chos-grub, *dBu ma chos kyi dbyings rnam par 'byed pa'i rab tu byed pa'i 'grel ba smra ba ngan pa'i tshang tshing 'joms par byed pa'i bstan bcos gnam lcags kyi me char*, p. 48 et seq.
[72] On *rang rig*, see p. 107, n. 4.

It is also that of spontaneous compassion.
Just like the wind of the breath of a small bird.
Or the movement of the unborn cock.
Or one hundreth part of a hair from a horse's tail split into a hundred,
Such is the quivering which joins intellect to mind.
This is called the Innate Nescience"
(*g.yo mi g.yo bag tsam g.yo/*
*'gyu mi 'gyu bag tsam 'gyu/*
*gzhi la g.yo 'gul med mod kyang/*
*rig pa'i rtsal la(s) g.yo 'gul byung/*
*'gyu ba de la yid ces zer/*
*de yang lhun grub thugs rje'i rtsal/*
*dpa' bo gser gyi blangs pa'am/*[73]
*bye'u rlung gi kha rlangs sam/*
*bya pho skyed med 'gul ba 'am/*
*rta rnga rgya(brgya) bshags cha tsam gcig/*
*rig pa nyid kyang yid du 'gyus/*
*lhan cig skyes pa'i ma rig zer/*).[74]

The notion of the straying from the *gzhi* or rather *'khrul gzhi* is called *yas 'khrul*,[75] "Errancy from the above". This notion is often developed into the idea of birth. In rDzogs chen of the Bon, it is associated with the theme of cosmogony. The return of the *sems* to the Primordial Basis is termed *mas ldog*,[76] "Return from the below" and this state of purity, i.e. the Primordial Basis is the "Rainbow Body" (*'ja' lus*), the ultimate goal of the rDzogs chen doctrine.

## The theory of the "Rainbow Body" ('ja' lus)

The theory of the "Rainbow Body" is related to many a conception of final achievement gained through the process of certain spiritual practices, but it is at the same time basically about what happens to the body of an adept of the rDzogs chen doctrine when he dies, and especially connected with the idea that Buddhahood can be attained within one single life and body (*tshe gcig lus gcig*). The conception of *nirvāṇa* in general and its implications with regard to the body are not meant to be discussed here,[77] but it may be useful to give just an example of an early work on

[73] I must confess that I failed to make sense of this line and so it remains untranslated. No other edition of the text has been available.
[74] *lTa ba klong yangs*, f. 201.
[75] *KG* f. 6; *Theg mchog mdzod*, f. 231b,4 et seq; *Tshig don mdzod*, f. 20b,2.
[76] *Rin po che rtsod pa'i 'khor lo*, *T* Vol. 144, No. 5841, p. 118–5–2. Other similar expressions exist, particularly in the Bonpo works: *lta ba yas 'bub*, "theory is constructed downwards from above"; *spyod pa mas 'dzegs*, "practice climbs up from below" (*gZer mig*, vol. Kha. f. 216a, 216b2).
[77] On *nirvāṇa* in general, see Th. Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*,

the question without bothering too much to trace up its origins in the sūtras. Two kinds of *nirvāṇa* are generally known and are explained in *GB*:[78]

> "The *nirvāṇa* of an arhat, the one who has radically abandoned all the passions but some residue of the body has not been discarded, is called the Passing Away from the misery accompanied by some residue of the body" (*sopadhi-śeṣa-nirvāṇa, zhes bya ba dgra bcom pa lta bu khams gsum gyi nyon mongs pa thams cad spangs nas/ phung po tsam ma bor ba'i ming ste/ phung po lhag ma dang bcas pa'i mya ngan las 'das pa zhes bya/*).

> "The *nirvāṇa* of those who have radically abandoned all five aggregates is called the Passing Away from misery without any residue of the body" (*niru-padhi-śeṣa-nirvāṇa, zhes bya ba nyon mongs pa thams cad spangs la phung po lnga'i sdug bsngal gyi me yang zhi bar byed pa'i ming ste/ phung po lhag ma med pa'i mya ngan las 'das pa zhes bya/*).

The actual sense of this explanation is that while the first type means passing away without having totally extinguished the *upadhi* rendered simply by *phung po*, but which in fact is defined as the "substratum of continued normal life", the second extinguishes it in its totality. The word *lhag ma* here denotes the remaining bit of the *upadhi* from the previous life. The phrase *phung po lhag ma med pa* or *ma lus pa* therefore means "without the residue of the *upadhi* from the previous life" in its original philosophical meaning. However, it came to be understood differently by various authors in later centuries. It is often taken to mean that in this life one can attain Enlightenment without leaving the body behind when one dies (*phung po lhag ma med par sangs rgyas pa*). In this case the word *phung po* is taken in its literal sense, the body. The notion of attaining Enlightenment within one single life was very intriguing. Thus it needed clarification. This may be illustrated by a catechetical passage in a Tun-huang document:

"What is the meaning of attaining Enlightenment in one life? It means that with the 'body that is the residue' one can succeed in becoming a Vidyādhāra having mastery over life" (*sangs rgyas sku tshe gcig gis 'grub don ci lta bu/ lhag mar bcas pa'i lus nyid kyis/ tshe la dbang ba'i rigs(rig) 'dzin thob/*).[79] When dealing with the doctrines of Mahāyoga tantras, the author of *SM* states that one who has rooted out the misery of the

Leningrad 1927, p. 45 et seq; T.R. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, London 1980, pp. 47, 271–75; D.L. Snellgrove, "Theological reflections on the Buddhist goal of Perfect Enlightenment", 1971, p. 83 et seq; "Traditional and doctrinal interpretations of Buddhahood", 1970, p. 17 et seq.

[78] p. 86–5–5.

[79] *PT* 837, lines 117 (identical to *IOL* 470 and to the *rDo rje sems dpa'i zhus lan, T* vol. 87, No. 5082, p. 165–4–6. See p. 67.

aggregates (*phung po'i zag pa zad pa*) can succeed in becoming a Vidyādhāra within the "residual body" (*lhag ma'i lus*) and then can live as long as he wishes in this world or just go to heaven without leaving the body behind (*lus 'di ma bral bar*). In order to illustrate this explanation, he gives a list of names of persons who are believed to have accomplished such a feat. Among the Indians for example, Vimalamitra showed (*tshul bstan pa*) that he died in Tibet, but was alive in India. Padmasambhava departed to convert the demons (*rākṣasa*). Among the Tibetans, the Lo-tsā-ba rMa Rin-chen-mchog went to heaven i.e. with his body; Jo-bo Nam-mkha'i snying-po and mKhan-po gNyan dPal-dbyangs both passed away escorted by the *ḍākinī*.

The author of *SM* devotes further discussion to the question as follows: "It is possible that the body is abandoned. In that case, one should not consider the teaching (i.e. of Mahāyoga tantras) as inferring a long distance (to Buddhahood). There are two ways of passing away mentioned in the Scripture. Even if one passes into the *nirvāṇa* that has no residue of the *upadhi*, one does it as soon as the knot or the net of the body is torn like the *garuḍa* and the lion" (*gal te phung po bor srid na'ang de la thag ring bar ma lta zhig/ mya ngan las 'das pa'i tshul gnyis ni bka' nyid las bzhugs pas/ phung po lhag ma med pa mya ngan las 'das na'ang/ khyung dang seng ge dpe ltar lus kyi dra* (*drva*) *ba'am rgya mdud bral ma thag pa la rnal 'byor bas gdon mi za'o/*).[80]

It is evident from this passage concerning *phung po lhag med* that the author of *SM* discusses the question along the lines of the explanation given in *GB*. However, the term *upadhi* which is translated by *phung po* as shown above is taken in the sense of referring to the actual body (*rnam par smin pa lhag ma'i lus*) in the case of the first type of *nirvāṇa* (*lhag bcas myang 'das*) whereas the author of *SM* has kept himself to the original sense of the term *upadhi*, the saṃsāric elements of which attach one to rebirth. Therefore in the late tenth century the conception of *nirvāṇa* as explained in *GB* was already undergoing different interpretations. This is confirmed by a similar view of the *phung po lhag med* attested in a Tun-huang document. It gives several names of persons who were believed to have accomplished the feat, but the document differs as to the actual meaning of the phrase. It explains that as long as there are no more dichotomic traces in the consciousness it is called *phung po lhag ma ma lus pa*.[81]

[80] *SM* pp. 276–77. The *garuḍa* and the lions are believed to have fully developed their constitutions as soon as they are born.

[81] *PT* 699, f. 3a,7: *phung po lhag ma ma lus pa ni/ gnubs nam ki(mkha'i) snying po dang/ rlang su ga ta go ca(cha) dang/* (3b) *'brom za ti dang/ mar kong za rin chen dang/ grub pa po de rnams kyang phung pi(po) lhag ma ma lus pa yin na/ don gyis na ci srid rnam par shes pa'i sems la/ gzung 'dzin gi(gyi) bag chags myi gnas pa ni/ phung po ma lus pa zhes bya ba yin no/*

For the author of *SM*, an adept of the Mahāyoga tantra passes into *nirvāṇa* either with the actual body or leaving it behind, but it must be mentioned that he does not speak of this in connection with rDzogs chen. The notion of *phung po lhag med* in rDzogs chen itself is mainly associated with the tradition of Klong sde and particularly with that of Man ngag gi sde. It is in the treatises belonging to the group of traditions just mentioned mostly going back only to the eleventh century that the notion takes a form different in its substance from the previous ones:

"As for the meaning of the term *phung po lhag med*, through the practices in accordance with this (i.e. Man ngag gi sde), the (internal) elements vanish into their original place. The attachment to (one's own) body ceases and the body no longer appears with the actual flesh and blood. As the five external elements cease (to exist), the appearance of earth and stone is no longer a coarse appearance, so nothing remains. There is no place it can go to together with the body made of actual flesh and blood" (*phung po lhag med ces bya ba'i go ba ni/ 'di ltar nyams su blangs bas 'byung ba lnga rang sar dengs nas/ lus kyi ' dzin pa rang 'gags te sha khrag rang dgar mi snang/ phyi'i 'byung ba lnga 'gags pas sa rdo'i snang ba rags pa mi snang ba las lhag ma med pa'o/ sha khrag rang ga ma'i gzugs dang bcas te song zhing 'gro ba'i sa yod pa ma yin no/*).[82]

It is manifestly clear from this explanation that in rDzogs chen the term *phung po lhag med* signifies a process in which the body gradually dissolves and finally ceases to exist as a human body, but retains its existence in a different form. It becomes a "body of light" (*'od lus*). This notion has been fairly constant from the eleventh century onwards. Klong-chen rab-'byams therefore explains the notion in similar terms: "the exhaustion of the elements after the principle of the primeval purity has been finalised (by means of) the *khregs chod*, "cutting off the rigidity" and the purification of the elements after the spontaneity has been finalised (by means of) the *thod rgal*, "passing over the crest", are identical in their (effectiveness) for purifying the external and internal substances, but (in the case of) the *khregs chod*, when the atoms (of the body) vanish separately, the (adept) is instantly released to the primordial purity. (He has no time to have) an appearance of a luminous body. (In the case of) the *thod rgal* (the adept assumes) a luminous body and accomplishes the "Great Movement". There is a difference between them in having a luminous body or not, but not in the way in which they are released to the primeval purity" (*khregs chod ka dag gi don mthar phyin nas 'byung ba zad pa dang/ thod rgal lhun grub mthar phyin pas 'byung ba dag pa gnyis/ phyi nang gi rdos bcas dag par tsam du 'dra yang/*

[82] *Zangs yig can snang byed sgron ma* (*Bi ma snying thig*, Vol. 7, Part I), p. 558.

*'di nyid rdul phran cha med so sor dengs nas skad cig la ka dag tu grol bas 'od lus mi snang la/ thod rgal 'od lus des 'pho ba chen mo 'grub pa'i cha tsam ste/ 'od lus yod med kyi khyad yod do/ ka dag gi sar grol lugs la kyad med do/*).[83]

The dissolution of the body into lights of different colours probably gave birth to the term of *'ja' lus*, "Rainbow Body", but the conception of *'ja' lus* itself is by no means unique to the rDzogs chen doctrine. However, in rDzogs chen the adept presupposes the attainment of such a body, for it is a question of returning to the primordial state which is conceived to be in form of light. The conception of *'ja' lus* of the rDzogs chen corresponds to the *sgyu ma'i sku*, "Illusory Body" of the *pañcakrama* of the *Guhyasamāja* and also to the *sgyu lus* of the six doctrines of Nāropa.[84] The notion of the *sgyu ma'i sku* as taught in the tantras is a subject of controversy among the late Tibetan scholastics. According to Tsong-kha-pa, it refers to *gnyug ma'i gzhi lus*, the "body of the natural basis", a phrase, however, considered to have no Sanskrit origin. He maintains that when this particular "body" is attained, the adept leaves his body like a snake changing its skin.[85] This interpretation therefore agrees in principle with the conception of *lhag med myang 'das* as explained in *GB* and as such is upheld by the dGe lugs pa as the correct one.[86] On the other hand, for Paṇ-chen Śākya mchog-ldan (1428–1507), the great Sa skya pa scholar who is a keen critic of Tsong-kha-pa's special doctrine, the empirical reality of conventional truth (*kun rdzab tshad grub*), the *sgyu lus* is achieved through dissolution of the body. He believes that those who follow the Mother tantras hold that as iron is made to turn into gold through the application of the "fluid" (*rtsi*), the material elements of the adept's body are worn down and the body of intellect is gained. The late scholar (i.e. Tsong-kha-pa), who is so attached to external things, says that when the adept attains Enlightenment, the "Body of the natural basis", he leaves behind his material remains" (*ma rgyud pa rnams gser 'gyur gyi rtsi las lcags la gser bzo ba ltar/ rnal 'byor lus kyi bem po'i khams/ zad nas ye shes sku byed gsungs/ 'di nas gsar byung chos smra ba/ phyi rol don la zhen chags pas/ gnyug ma gzhi lus sangs rgyas tshe/ bem lus lhag mar bzhag ces zer/*).[87]

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[83] *gNas lugs mdzod*, f. 85b,2.

[84] Cf. Śākya mchog-ldan, *sGyu ma'i lam rim gyi gsal byed nor bu'i them skas, Chos tshan brgya dang brgyad pa*, p. 342.

[85] *Ibid.*, 344; Cf. Tsong-kha-pa Blo-bzang grags-pa, *Rim lnga gsal ba'i sgron ma* (*T* Vol. 158, No. 6168), pp. 52–4–3; 57–3–7.

[86] Cf. 'Jam-dbyangs bzhad-pa, *Grub mtha' chen mo*, Kha, f. 15b.

[87] The passage occurs in an article without a title by the author, but contained in the collection: *Chos tshan brgya dang brgyad pa* (p. 285). See also *sGyu ma'i sku sgrub pa'i gzhi la log par rtog pa sel byed gong ma rnams kyi rjes 'jug smra ba'i rgyan* by the same author and in the same collection (p. 341). The dissolution of the body with a simile from alchemy is

The question of the practice of watching the sun light in the rDzogs chen teaching raised much criticism which we have briefly discussed earlier. It is very closely connected with the conception of the luminous body. Indeed, it is considered to be the means of its realisation. However, the VIIIth Karma-pa, Mi-bskyod rdo-rje is of the opinion that this practice and the conception of the luminous body itself in rDzogs chen are in fact of Bonpo origin: "the Bonpo have many precepts for watching lights and hold that if one's body enters into light one attains the "Eternal body" without leaving any residue. If the light enters into one's own body, one attains the "Eternal body that leaves a residue" (*bon chos rnams na 'od la lta ba'i gdams pa mang po zhig dang/ rang lus 'od la phar zhugs na lhag med g.yung drung gi sku thob la/ 'od rang la tshur zhugs na lhag bcas g.yung drung gi sku thob par bzhed pa'i lugs snang ba la khyad cung zad kyang ma mchis so/*).[88]

Here too the terms *lhag bcas* and *lhag med* show that the Bonpo are also following the original explanation given in *GB*, but they like their rNying ma pa colleagues have taken them in the literal sense, *phung po*, the physical body and not the *upadhi*. Although the statement of Mi-bskyod rdo-rje concerning the Bonpo being rich in their precepts for watching lights is exact enough, the reference to the notion of the light entering the body and vice-versa are not attested in the Bonpo works on rDzogs chen accessible at present. Nonetheless, it is certain that the conception of *phung po lhag med*, that is to say the dissolution of the material body into lights is common to both traditions.[89]

Other critics of rDzogs chen hold that the notion of the dissolution of the physical body into lights is totally extraneous to Buddhism. dPal-mang dKon-mchog rgyal-mtshan, for example, has made the following remark on the question: "one repeatedly says that the body disappears without remaining if one takes up the rNying ma pa precepts. It is said that when the Bon was at its apogee, the Tibetan kings did not leave their bodies

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explained more explicitly in another short work entitled: *sKye 'phags snang ba mthun pa la brtsad pa rdo rje'i gseng lam*, also in the same collection, p. 409: *dngul chu'i thig(s) pas gser dag ni/ lcags la zhugs pa ji bzhin du/ rnam smin bem po'i khams zad nas/ 'ja' tshon rdo rje'i sku yang 'grub/* – "Just as the drops of quicksilver transmute the iron into gold so are the elements of the material body exhausted and the *vajra* rainbow body is achieved". This simile is already cited in a similar context by Rong-zom Paṇḍita in his *rGyud spyi'i dngos po gsal bar byed pa'i yi ge* (*Rong zom bka' 'bum*, p. 510). The simile is perhaps drawn from texts on alchemy, e.g. the *gSer 'gyur rtsi'i bstan bcos* (*T* Vol. 143, No. 5803), but it is not used in rDzogs chen texts.

[88] *LB* p. 88.

[89] For the Bonpo however the idea of *'ja' lus* is not confined to the rDzogs chen doctrine either. It is a common notion found in works, e.g. *gZi brjid*, Vol. Nga, chapter 17, *sKad 'gyur so so'i bon bstan pa*, f. 427: *phung po nam mkha' la phra rab kyis(kyi) rdul du lhags te/ gzha' mtshon(tshon) gyi 'od du 'phos nas sangs rgyas . . ./*

behind since they went to heaven by means of the "divine dMu-cord".[90] The resemblance of this to that of transforming the body into the rainbow, the disappearance of the body into lights and the vanishing of the body without residue appears very clear" (*rNying ma'i gdams ngag nyams su blangs na phung po lhag med du yal 'gro ba yang yang bshad do/ bon dar dus su bod kyi rgyal po rnams lha'i dmu thag la brten nas gnam du gshegs pas sku gdung med par bshad pa dang/ 'di dag gis 'ja' lus su 'phos pa dang/ 'od skur yal ba dang/ phung po lhag med du song bar bshad pa rnams cha 'dra bar snang ngo/*).

This critic further emphatically states that none of the Buddhist philosophical schools holds such a doctrine. They all agree that the body is a karmic product of previous existence and it is to be abandoned (*snga ma'i las nyon gyis 'phang ba'i phung po dor ba*). In Father Tantras, it is said that the "Illusory Body" (*sgyu lus*) is to enter into the old body (*phung po rnying pa la 'jug pa*) and in Mother Tantras, it is stated that one attains the level of Vidyādhāra without abandoning one's body (*ma rgyud las lus ma spangs bar rigs*(*sic*) *'dzin gyi sar gshegs pa*) and one is led to heaven with this very body (*lus de nyid kyis mkha' spyod du 'khrid pa*).[91]

The dGe lugs pa's stand with regard to this question is therefore similar to that of *SM* and both in turn to some degree have maintained the original interpretation of *lhag bcas myang 'das* and *lhag med myang 'das* given in *GB*. However, the interpretation of the sense of *phung po lhag med* as given in the rNying ma pa and the Bonpo texts in the context of rDzogs chen which goes back only to the eleventh century reflects to a large extent the notion of the return to heaven of the early Tibetan kings, a notion which the Bonpo particularly cherish, but as we have noted in the case of Śākya mchog-ldan, certain Sa skya pa scholastics also maintain a similar conception of the *'ja' lus* to that of rDzogs chen. However, the interpretation of the tantras of the gSar ma pa with regard to the notion of *'ja' lus* is a subject of debate between the dGe lugs pa and Sa skya pa schools. It would therefore be convenient for us to leave aside this hermeneutic problem between the two schools as it has in fact no direct bearing upon the early development of the conception of *'ja' lus* in rDzogs chen.

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[90] Khyung-po Blo-gros rgyal-mtshan (*rGyal rabs bon gyi 'byung gnas, Three sources for a history of Bon*, No. 1, Delhi 1974, p. 79): *spyi gtsug tu 'od kyi dmu thag rgyang thag skya na re yod pas 'das pa'i dus su sku yi zhabs nas yal te spyi gtsug gi dmu thag la thim/ 'od kyi dmu thag kyang dgungs* (*dgung la*) *thim nas 'gro bas . . ./* – "(The kings) have a dMu cord in the form of white light hanging down above their heads. When they die, they disappear from their feet upwards dissolving into the dMu cord of light which in turn vanishes into heaven." Cf. also *MNy* f. 181.

[91] *BNy* pp. 293–94.

## rDzogs pa chen po with respect to Phyag rgya chen po

sGam-po-pa bSod-nams rin-chen (1079–1153) is considered to be the chief exponent of the doctrine of Phyag rgya chen po (Mahāmudrā) of the bKa' brgyud pa. It is mainly expounded in short works like the *Tshogs chos legs mdzes ma*[92] whose primary sources are Indian Buddhist works such as *Mahāyānottara* tantra and the *Dohā*[93] songs of Saraha. The central point of the theory is as in the case of rDzogs chen and later the *gzhan stong* theory of the Jo nang pa, to recognise the "self-being of the luminous mind" (*sems kyi rang bzhin 'od gsal ba*) to which sGam-po-pa gave the name of Phyag rgya chen po (Phyag chen).[94] He maintains that his theory bears no relation to any of the Buddhist doctrines then known in Tibet, particularly the "Three Great Ones" (*chen po gsum gyis ma reg pa*), *viz.* dBu ma chen po, considered to be the most subtle theory of the sūtrayānic philosophy. Phyag rgya chen po of the *saṃpannakrama*, thought to be the most profound part of the vajrayānic practice, and rDzogs pa chen po, claimed as the topmost of the nine different doctrines (*theg pa dgu*) – all the three according to sGam-po-pa are in fact object of the conceptual thought whereas Phyag chen does not constitute an object of any kind of cognition (*blo las 'das pa*).[95]

sGam-po-pa therefore does not admit that his Phyag chen has any connection with rDzogs chen, not even with Phyag rgya chen po of the tantric teaching. This stand however gave rise to the criticism made by Sa-paṇ Kun-dga' rgyal-mtshan (1182–1251) who pointed out that if sGam-po-pa's Phyag chen has got nothing to do with that of the vajrayānic practice, then it has no scriptural basis, because no such doctrine is taught in sūtras.[96] This shows that Sa-paṇ does not accept the question of the Phyag chen according to the sūtras (*mdo lugs kyi phyag chen*) which later Tibetan writers, particularly certain dGe lugs pa masters, distinguish from the Phyag chen of the tantric teaching (*sngags lugs kyi phyags chen*).[97]

The metaphorical name of sGam-po-pa's Phyag chen is dKar-po chigthub,[98] "the white one that has power of itself", i.e. capable of eliminating

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[92] *Collected Works of sGam-po-pa bSod-nams-rin-chen*, Delhi 1975, Vol. I, No. 5, p. 220.

[93] Śākya mchog-ldan, *Tshangs pa'i 'khor lo* (*Collected Works* Vol. 17), p. 335.

[94] *ibid.*, p. 335; *GCh* Kha, p. 178.

[95] dBon-po Shes-rab 'byung-gnas (1187–1241), *Dam chos dgongs pa gcig pa'i 'grel chen*, Bir 1975, Vol. II, text No. 15, pp. 403–4; *Tshangs pa'i 'khor lo*, pp. 347, 364.

[96] *DR* pp. 309–2–2; 309–3–5.

[97] *ZhL* pp. 577–80; Vth Dalai Lama, *rTsis dkar nag las brtsams pa'i dris lan nyin byed dbang po'i snang ba*, f. 39b.

[98] *Dus gsum mkhyen pa'i zhu lan* (No. 10, p. 376); *rJe phag mo gru pa'i zhu lan* (No. 11, p. 472. *Collected Works*); *Tshangs pa'i 'khor lo*, p. 347.

nescience, the saṃsāric root without the need of other religious practices, like the medicinal plant dKar-po chig-thub. This plant is believed effective in curing a certain disease by itself.[99] If sGam-po-pa has used it as a name for his theory, it is not at all surprising since he himself was a renowned physician and is often known as Dvags-po lha-rje or under his medical name lHa-rje 'Tsho-byed gzhon-nu. Consequently the Phyag chen theory is known as *dKar po chig thub gi lta ba*.

The conception of *chig thub* already occurs in songs of Mi-la ras-pa: "As I know one, I am learned in all", (*gcig shes kun la mkhas pa yin/*).[100] This conception of "knowing one thing, understand all" (*gcig shes kun grol*) is later adopted to denote a similar idea with regard to rDzogs chen by certain rNying ma pa masters, e.g. Guru Chos-dbang (1212–1270) who has composed several treatises on rDzogs chen entitled *gCig shes kun grol*.[101]

Sa-paṇ further asserts that the Phyag chen of sGam-po-pa is in fact a name disguising the doctrine of Hva-shang Mahāyāna. It is, he maintains, therefore a "Chinese religious system" (*rgya nag chos lugs*) and furthermore belongs to the "Chinese system of rDzogs chen" (*rgya nag lugs kyi rdzogs chen*).[102] The terms *yas 'babs*, "descending downwards" and *mas 'dzegs*, "climbing upwards" are, he points out, simply another way of expressing Rim gyis pa, "gradualist" and Cig car ba, "simultaneist". In short, Sa-paṇ considers that the theory of *yas 'babs* is identical to the simultaneist approach of Hva-shang Mahāyāna.[103]

The term *yas 'babs* denotes "that which comes down from above" (*yas nas 'babs pa*), i.e. the practice in meditation begins from the highest level. It reflects the argument of the Hva-shang who is, as we shall see, supposed to have said that his simultaneist approach is like the bird *garuḍa* landing on a tree (*khyung nam mkha' las shing rtser 'bab pa ltar*). By contrast, the term *mas 'dzegs*, "that which climbs up from below" refers to the advocates of the gradualist approach, i.e. to take up the Buddhist practice step by step beginning from the lowest level like a monkey climbing up a tree (*sprel bu shing la 'dzegs pa ltar*).[104] However, neither term is attested in the works of

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[99] *dkar po chig thub dug sdud gnyan srin 'joms/* (The *rGyud bzhi*, Dharamsala 1971, Part II (*bShad rgyud*), chapter 10, p. 209). dKar-po chig-thub is also the name of a stone used as medicine, *ibid.*, p. 196.

[100] gTsang-smyon Heruka (1452–1007), *rJe btsun mi la ras pa'i rnam thar rgyas par phye ba mgur 'bum*, Varanasi 1971, p. 204.

[101] E.g. *brTags pas cig shes kun grol gyi theg mchog yang tig* (for references, see the Bibliography).

[102] *DR* pp. 309–3–4: *da lta'i phyag rgya chen po ni/ phal cher rgya nag chos lugs yin/*

[103] *DR* pp. 309–2–5: *da lta'i phyag rgya chen po dang/ rgya nag lugs kyi rdzogs chen la/ yas 'bab dang ni mas 'dzegs gnyis/ rim gyis pa dang cig char ba/ ming 'dogs bsgyur ba ma gtogs pa/ don la khyad par dbye ba med/* Cf. also Stein 1971, p. 9.

[104] For reference see note 114.

sGam-po-pa that are considered to be fundamental on his Phyag chen theory, such as the *Thar rgyan*.

The two terms, on the other hand, appear in the Bonpo works going back at least to the twelfth century, but they are not used to represent the two diametrically opposed views. For the Bonpo, they are only two different practices that can be taken up by one person. The theory of the adept begins from the top level (*lta ba yas 'babs*) whereas his practice begins from the low level (*spyod pa mas 'dzegs*).[105]

Although Sa-paṇ's chronic doubt about sGam-po-pa's Phyag chen had a lasting influence on later Tibetan Buddhist writers, his criticism has never really been accepted as valid. On the contrary, his views are refuted even by eminent Sa skya pa scholastics, like Śākya mchog-ldan[106] not to mention the bKa' brgyud pa themselves. According to Padma dkar-po (1527–1592), Sa-paṇ's criticism of Phyag chen simply amounts to "a madman's words" (*smyon pa'i tshig*). In Padma dkar-po's opinion, Sa-paṇ has not really seen the historical account of the debate which according to him is to be found at the beginning of the *Bhavanakrama* written by the "disciples" of Kamalaśīla.[107]

Sa-paṇ uses the testament (*zhal chems*) of Śāntarakṣita as his evidence to prove that sGam-po-pa's Phyag chen is the dKar-po chig-thug mentioned in the testament.[108] What Śāntarakṣita foresees in his testament is in fact simply the doctrinal dispute among his Buddhist followers in Tibet. It refers to the well known Sino-Indian controversy in Tibet in the eighth century. Sa-paṇ's source of the question dKar-po chig-thub and the two metaphorical terms is in fact a particular version of the account of the controversy as we will see.

First of all, in the account of the controversy given in the French edition of *BZh* neither the phrase dKar po chig thub nor the two terms occur.[109] Similarly, in his *DS*, Bu-ston Rin-chen-grub does not use them either,[110] nor are they used in most of *chos 'byung* that follow his tradition.[111] On the other hand, in his *KhG*, dPa'o gTsug-lag Phreng-ba quotes the dKar po

[105] *gZer mig*, Vol. Kha, ff. 216a, 216b; *gZi brjid*, Vol. Kha, Chapter 7, *rGyal pos bka' khrims bstsal ba*, f. 521.

[106] *Tshangs pa'i 'khor lo*, pp. 333–65.

[107] Padma dkar-po, *Phyag rgya chen po'i man ngag gi bshad sbyar rgyal ba'i gan mdzod*, ff. 162a–65a. Padma dkar-po quotes the story at length, but it is not to be found with the three *sgom rim* of Kamalaśīla in the Peking edition of *T* Vol. 102, Nos. 5310–12.

[108] *DR* p. 309–3–2: *rgya nag dge slong byung nas ni/ dkar po chig thub ces bya ba/ cig char pa yi lam ston 'gyur/*

[109] Pp. 56–62.

[110] *DS* pp. 886–890.

[111] E.g. bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan (1372–), *rGyal rabs gsal ba'i me long*, pp. 221–23; Vth Dalai Lama, *Bod kyi deb ther dpyid kyi rgyal mo glu dbyangs*, p. 66.

chig thub version along with the other versions, but he makes it clear by stating that it is a particular version (*yang lugs gcig la*) and after making an analysis of it, he finally rejects it as a purely apocryphal interpolation.[112]

In the recent Chinese edition of *BZh* which is based on several manuscripts and is practically identical to the French edition except the second part of the French edition which is not in the Chinese edition, the dKar po chig thub version of the debate is given also with the words *yang lugs gcig la*, "in another version",[113] just as it is quoted in *KhG*. It is therefore this particular version of the account of the debate containing the question of dKar po chig thub and the two terms on which Sa-paṇ's criticism of Phyag chen, however misleading it sounds, is based. It is nevertheless an old version going back to a period earlier than the twelfth century, for it is this version only that is given by Nyang-ral Nyi-ma 'od-zer (1136–1204) in his *MNy*,[114] the earliest dated *chos 'byung* up to date. Neither *SM* nor the Tun-huang documents concerning rDzogs chen and the Cig car ba tradition use the terms in question. It seems therefore that the dKar po chig thub version of the debate came into existence in the eleventh century and most probably prior to sGam-po-pa's elaboration of his Phyag chen theory.

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[112] *KhG* f. 122a: *de dag ni phyis kyi rtog ge pa za don la sdang ba chos spong la mkhas nyams dang phra dog la khyad nor re ba rnams kyis bcug par go sla'o/*

[113] *sBa bzhed ces bya ba sba gsal snang gi bzhed pa*, Mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1980, pp. 72–75.

[114] ff. 464, 470.

CHAPTER EIGHT

# RDZOGS CHEN IN THE BONPO TRADITION

While a sufficient number of texts on rDzogs chen of the rNying ma pa tradition are available for research, only a limited number of the Bonpo texts have been accessible and only in the last few years. There is no collection comparable to *NyG*. Those which are available are of relatively late origin since they do not seem to date back beyond the eleventh century. Hence here we do not pretend to have been able to engage in detailed comparative philological research. What we intend to do in this brief chapter is to make a survey of some representative works indicating their traditional ascriptions and philosophical affiliations paying particular attention to the teachings concerned with rDzogs chen of the Bonpo tradition.[1]

The *Gab pa dgu bskor*[2] is one the fundamental works on rDzogs chen of the Bonpo tradition. It is usually included in the group of nine texts known as *Sems smad sde dgu*[3] and is reputed to have been "rediscovered" by gShen-chen Klu-dga' (996–1035). Among these, a text entitled *Rig-pa'i khu byug* is mentioned and is said to have nine chapters. It is often quoted in later works,[4] but has so far not been available for comparison with the Tun-huang document, *IOL* 647 which has the same title. There are a number of exegetical works on the *Gab pa*[5] and the *'Grel bzhi*[6] is considered as the most important one and is ascribed to Dran-pa nam-mkha'.

The next group of texts in importance on rDzogs chen is the *bsGrags pa skor gsum*[7] consisting of a number of texts. The principal one is entitled *gSer gyi rus sbal* which we will have occasion to compare with a rNying ma pa work in a later chapter.[8] This collection originates in gZhod-ston dNgos-grub grags-pa (c. end of the 11th century).[9] While the texts in this set are mainly concerned with the theoretical exposition of the rDzogs chen philosophy, the author devoted another set of texts to the

[1] Cf. pp. 181, 188.
[2] Karmay 1977, No. 52.
[3] *Legs bshad mdzod* (Karmay 1977, No. 51, n. 8, p. 208).
[4] *dByings rig mdzod* (Karmay 1977, No. 94, p. 103).
[5] Per Kvarne 1974, Part II, pp. 139–40.
[6] Karmay 1977, No. 3, text 5.
[7] Karmay 1977, No. 54.
[8] See p. 220.
[9] For a most illuminating study on this personage, see Blondeau 1984, p. 89 et seq.

subject of practicability of the theories under the title *Yang rtse klong chen*.[10]

Although the teachings contained in the *Gab pa* (hidden) and the *bsGrags pa* (revealed) have independent spiritual lineages from one another, they are philosophically very close to each other and basically have much the same view as that of the Sems sde trend of the rNying ma pa. The texts belonging to these collections are traditionally classified as *gter ma*, "rediscovered texts" in contrast to the collection of *ZhNy* which falls into the category of the Oral Tradition (*snyan brgyud*).[11] We shall have occasion to come back to this last tradition below, especially with reference to its teachings concerning light.

Apart from these generally known streams of rDzogs chen, there are also a number of isolated ones which represent more or less independent traditions, for example, the group of *Nam mkha' 'phrul mdzod*[12] tradition which originates in the teachings of Tshe-dbang rig-'dzin,[13] but philosophically none of these differ much from the Sems sde trend in general.

Beside these rDzogs chen traditions, the Bonpo also have developed other systems of meditation, such as the *A khrid* cycle[14] which due to the studies of our colleague Per Kvarne is now well known.

In speaking of rDzogs chen of the Bonpo tradition, we perhaps cannot pass without having a few words about the *dByings rig mdzod*.[15] It is an extensive work in two volumes written by the recent Bonpo master, Shar-rdza bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan (1859–1934)[16] who completed it in 1909 at his hermitage g.Yung-drung lhun-po-ri in rDza-khog, Kham. The importance of this work with regard to rDzogs chen of the Bonpo tradition and so rDzogs chen in general lies in its systematic presentation of early sources and their treatment in a comprehensive manner. It therefore provides an overall view of the rDzogs chen tradition as understood by a Bonpo practitioner living in recent times. This master is one of the last adepts of rDzogs chen who is believed by both the Bonpo and the rNying

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[10] Karmay 1977, No. 55.

[11] Karmay 1977, No. 58.

[12] *sPyi rgyud chen po nam mkha' dkar po ye khri mtha' sel gyi rgyud* (for references, see Bibliography: Bonpo sources).

[13] Cf. Blondeau 1985, p. 123 et seq.

[14] See Bibliography under Kvarne.

[15] Karmay 1977, No. 94.

[16] When I began to work on the *Legs bshad mdzod* in 1966, I had as a source a one-folio manuscript prayer in which it was stated that the author wrote the prayer just before he died and he was aged seventy-six. However, according to the biography (f. 278b) of the author written by Khod-spungs sKal-bzang rgyal-mtshan (see for references: Bibliography under Bonpo sources), he died in the year wood-dog. He therefore died in 1934 and not in 1935 (wood-pig) as I have given (Karmay 1972, p. XV).

ma pa to have attained the "Rainbow Body". Thus bDud-'joms 'Jigs-bral ye-shes rdo-rje felt compelled to present him as a rNying ma pa teacher under the name of rDza-pa bKra-shis 'od-zer.[17] It is also to be noted that his "attainment" of the "Rainbow Body" could not be dispensed with in a new chronological table published in 1985 in Peking.[18]

## The conception of light as the source of the phenomenal world

The most characteristic theme that is found in rDzogs chen of the Bonpo tradition is its teaching concerning the origin of the phenomenal world and the beginning of man's descent into existence. However, this theme, unlike the myths about the origin of the world recounted in popular rituals, is developed along the lines of the rDzogs chen philosophical system. It is the luminous mind who is the creator of the world, the world being nothing but its own illusory projection. This theory as we have discussed elsewhere in this work is formulated in connection with the genetic state, the Primordial Basis existing in the form of variegated light.[19]

The collection of *ZhNy* texts is a good example among the Bonpo texts on rDzogs chen for the teaching concerned with light. It is considered specially important for the fact that its teaching continued from a very early age through an uninterrupted spiritual lineage till the present day. In its early stage, it begins with Kun-tu bzang-po and then the teaching is transmitted through a number of teachers reaching finally Ta-pi hri-tsa ('Od-kyi khye'u) who in turn transmitted it to the master Gyer-spungs sNang-bzher lod-po. The latter is said to be a contemporary with Khri Srong-lde-btsan (742–797),[20] but so far we have been unable to find any evidence of his existence in the eighth century.

Several works giving accounts of the successive teachers in spiritual lineage are extant, e.g. the one composed by Bru rGyal-ba g.yung-drung (1242–1290)[21] and the more extensive one by sPa bsTan-rgyal seng-ge bzang-po who wrote it in 1419.[22]

The section entitled *'Khor lo bzhi sbrags*[23] of *ZyNy* is of particular interest with regard to the conception of light as the source of the phenomenal world. In this work, how man views his relation to his environment

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[17] *lHa dbang g.yul las rgyal ba*, f. 373b.
[18] *Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo*, Peking 1985, p. 3290.
[19] Cf. p. 185.
[20] Cf. D.L. Snellgrove and H. Richardson, *A Cultural History of Tibet*, London 1968, pp. 99–105.
[21] Karmay 1977, No. 58, II, Ka.
[22] Karmay 1977, No. 50, Ka.
[23] Karmay 1977, No. 50, Zha.

and so to the phenomenal world and beyond are elucidated within the frame-work of four short sections. Each section has a subtitle ending with the word *'khor lo* (wheel).

I. "The wheel of the static basis" (*gnas pa gzhi'i 'khor lo*).

This refers to *kun gzhi*, the genetic state where the notion of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* are undifferentiated, but this state is personified with the name of Rang Shes-rig-gi rgyal-po ("King of Self-knowledge") existing in a milieu of three elements: "sound" (*sgra*), "light" (*'od*) and "ray" (*zer*).

II. "The wheel of interdependence concerning awakening and error" (*rtogs 'khrul rten 'brel gyi 'khor lo*).

This section is about Rang Shes-rig moving away from his milieu. If he comprehends the three elements as being of his own and therefore not originating anywhere, the nirvāṇic state is realised, but if he makes the error of thinking of those three elements as being from elsewhere, a dichotomous conceptualisation is produced. The ensuing result is the saṃsāric state.

When the nirvāṇic state is about to be realised the light among the three elements shines forth in five colours: white, green, red, blue and yellow. Each of these creates what are known as sixteen kinds of "manifestations of the enlightened state" (*mya ngan las 'das pa'i rnam sprul*), eighty kinds of them in all (16 × 5 = 80). On the other hand, when the error is committed, the saṃsāric state appears, and each light engenders sixteen kinds of illusory appearance (*'khrul snang*) associated man's physical body and of his external world, eighty in all in opposition to the eighty "manifestations of the enlightened state".

III. "The wheel of the psychic veins in the vital points of the human body" (*lus gnad rtsa'i 'khor lo*).

Here the human body is assimilated to the Indian conception of the physical world. Different parts of man's body are thought to symbolise different continents, mountains, the sun and moon and the rest. The luminous Rang Shes-rig himself resides in the heart of the body like a lighted lamp placed in a vase.

IV. "The wheel of time in the intermediate state" (*bar do dus kyi 'khor lo*).

This part deals with the period between death and taking on another birth. It is mainly concerned with the rDzogs chen adept who has not yet succeeded in accomplishing the realisation of the "Rainbow Body", but confident enough to traverse the dreaded "intermediate state" just after the cessation of breath. It is in this state that the sound, light and rays appear most vividly and the rDzogs chen adept is expected to "recognise" instantly these elements as being nothing but coming from his own Rang

Shes-rig, and as a result the nirvāṇic state referred to above is reached.

The conception of the four psychic wheels is of Tantric origin, hence Indian, and so is the notion of the "intermediate state", but the idea concerning the light which radiates from Rang Shes-rig is a theme particularly developed in Bonpo works such as the text under discussion. The lights which shine forth from the Primordial Basis are here presented as the source of the phenomenal world and its transcendental state, illustrating well the rDzogs chen philosophical conception of the mind being capable either of creating its own illusory world or releasing itself to its own former state, the Primeval Purity.

This conception is not only expounded in *ZhNy*, particularly in the text of which we have just made a summary, but also exhaustively illustrated in painting on a *thangka*. However, the *thangka* as in the case of the text carries neither the name of supervisor of the drawings nor that of the artist nor any indication concerning the date of its execution. On the other hand, it provides copious inscriptions describing the various elements depicted as well as giving sources by quoting from a number of texts, especially from *ZhNy*.

It is drawn on a white background with a figure of the rDzogs chen adept in meditation posture in the centre. The whirling blue, yellow, white, green and red represent lights which blaze upward from its sinciput projecting the eighty kinds of "manifestations of the enlightened state" in the upper celestial sphere. This part of the painting represents the realisation of the nirvāṇic state. In contrast to this, other lights radiate downward from various parts of the figure creating the phenomenal world which symbolises the saṃsāric state.[24]

[24] The *thangka* was discovered in a ruined Bonpo monastery, sKyang-tshang in Amdo during a research mission by the author in 1985. The monastery was destroyed by the Chinese Cultural Revolution in 1960s. A further detailed study of the painting is envisaged.

CHAPTER NINE

# THE THREE TRENDS OF THE RDZOGS CHEN TRADITION

From the tenth century, the word *rdzogs chen* came to cover various teachings claimed as belonging to the rDzogs chen tradition. Some were considered to be very doubtful so that lHa Bla-ma Ye-shes-'od did not hesitate to declare them "perverse doctrine" (*chos log*).[1] Others were regarded as being totally nihilistic, for example, the rDzogs chen rde'u ma, which, like the Ch'an rejects most of what one considers to be general Buddhist principles, such as the conception of "cause and effect" or that of rebirth. According to Sog-zlog-pa, the rDzogs chen rde'u ma goes back to Bla-ma Sro-ba who wrote a treatise entitled *rDe'u skor bdun pa*[2] advocating this doctrine and in the eleventh century, a disciple of Rong-zom Chos-kyi bzang-po, lCe-ston adhered to it.

Sa skya pa polemicists have no hesitation in connecting it with the teaching of Hva-shang Mahāyana.[3] It is certainly a vestige of the early Cig car ba tradition still lingering on in the margin of the main rDzogs chen tradition.

The rDzogs chen of the rNying ma pa has more or less three distinguishable trends, namely the Sems sde, Klong sde and Man ngag gi sde. They represent for the rNying ma pa the authentic teaching of rDzogs chen in contrast to the others, such as those mentioned above. The differences in philosophy of the three are less discernible than the emphasis on their respective spiritual lineages and original sources. However, not all the three gained much ground as a teaching nor have all of them survived as a living tradition. The first two declined soon after the eleventh century and were finally extinguished as living religious practices, while the third which is in fact of relatively late origin, persisted and further developed all through the centuries until today. In the following pages, an attempt will be made to discuss how each of them arose and developed as a living religious tradition.

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[1] Karmay 1979, p. 154.

[2] *Yid kyi mun sel*, f. 94b, 95a; Cf. *TTGL* p. 157. The word *rde'u* is probably connected with *lte* (Taoism?). Ne'u pandita Grags-pa smon-lam blo-gros states "that some believe that it came (to Tibet) after the defeat inflicted upon the Chinese by the minister Bran-ka" (*kha cig na re/ blon bran kas rgya 'khrug(s) 'phan(pham) par byas pas lte chos byung nas/ Me tog phreng ba*, p. 116). Minister Bran-ka dPal-gyi yon-tan is the first signatory of the 821–22 Sino-Tibetan treaty (Richardson 1952, pp. 40, 74).

[3] *BT* f. 112b.

## I. Sems sde

The Sems sde, as the term suggests, is mainly concerned with the "mind" (*sems*). It is the starting point in the doctrine with which we shall deal below. Vairocana is thought of as the principal originator of this trend in Tibet. Its fundamental treatises are the eighteen texts which we have already discussed elsewhere.[4] The other major treatise of this trend is *KG*. It is a large work with eighty-four chapters divided into three sections, to a large extent an overlapping with the eighteen texts. It is presented as a translation from Sanskrit, hence of Indian origin, but this claim was questioned and so its authenticity has been much doubted ever since the eleventh century. It must be said that it does have a dubious character.[5] Elsewhere, we have studied its thirty-first chapter. In the light of this study, we came to the conclusion that the text of the chapter is not a translation from another language.[6] The existence of the Tun-huang manuscript version of this chapter therefore raises further questions concerning the way in which *KG* was composed. However, whether it is composed on the basis of the first five of the eighteen texts or the latter are extractions from it remains to be studied. In any case, for the Vth Dalai Lama, the first five texts of the eighteen texts are extractions from *KG*.[7]

The exposition of the Sems sde texts was according to the tradition transmitted to gNyags Jñānakumāra and g.Yu-sgra snying-po by Vairocana himself. It then passed through several masters including gNubs

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[4] See p. 23.

[5] Karmay 1975, pp. 148–155; 1980, p. 16, n. 41.

[6] See p. 47. Karmay 1985, p. 281.

[7] According to *GCh* (Vol. 4, p. 167) the *sNga 'gyur lnga* (Cf. p. 23) are excerpts from *KG* (Kaneko No. 1) as follows:

| | *KG* |
|---|---|
| 1. *Khyung chen lding ba* (Kaneko No. 8(1). f. 419, 4–423,3) | Chapter 22, ff. 73, 5–77,6. |
| 2. *sGom pa don drug* (seems to be missing in *NyG* and *Vairo rgyud 'bum*) | Chapter 26, ff. 82, 1–84,1. |
| 3. *rTsal chen sprugs pa* (Kaneko No. 8(2), ff. 423, 3–424,1). | Chapter 27, ff. 84, 1–85,2. |
| 4. *rDo rje smes dpa' nam mkha' che* (Kaneko No. 13, f. 495, 2–499,6, however, these are not identical in the Thimphu edition *of NyG*). | Chapter 3(30), ff. 90, 4–96,6. |
| 5. *Rig pa'i khu byug* (Kaneko No. 8, f. 419, 1–4). | Chapter 31, ff. 96, 6–97,3. |

According to Chos-grags bzang-po, Klong-chen rab-'byams wrote a commentary on *KG* entitled *Sems 'grel nyi ma'i 'od zer* (*Kun mkhyen dri med 'od zer gyi rnam thar mthong ba don ldan*, from now on referred to as *mThong ba don ldan*, p. 79).

Sangs-rgyas ye-shes. While little is known of the personages in the succession list, gNubs lived in the tenth century. As we have shown elsewhere, he was a great writer and his *SM* is the most important work on rDzogs chen in general and particularly on Sems sde.[8]

The eleventh century saw two great masters of the Sems sde trend. A-ro Ye-shes 'byung-gnas, whose work, the *Theg pa chen po'i rnal 'byor*, is famous, but has not turned up yet. The way he taught and his tradition became known as the "System of Khams" (*Khams lugs*) as he hailed from there. Nothing much otherwise is known about his life. The other great master is Rong-zom Paṇḍita Chos-kyi bzang-po. His *ThCh* is perhaps the best work on rDzogs chen in the eleventh century. He too taught and wrote many works. Later his way of teaching became known as the "System of Rong" (*Rong lugs*).[9] Many more lines branched out and many a system evolved from the Sems sde trend, but after the eleventh century, it declined and finally fell almost into oblivion as other trends of rDzogs chen came to be established, particularly that of the Man ngag gi sde from about the beginning of the twelfth century. By the seventeenth, the Sems sde trend became extinct as a separate living tradition. In this connection, gTer-bdag gling-pa states that practically nothing much survived of the Sems sde apart from the transmission of the "permission" (lung) in his time.[10]

## II. Klong sde

Klong sde dwells upon the theme of the "mental sphere" (*klong*) rather than mind itself as its doctrinal basis. This trend is traced back to sBam Mi-pham mgon-po who received the instructions from Vairocana orally (*rna brgyud*). This, according to the tradition, was oral, because sBam was an old man of eighty-five and illiterate when he met his master in Kham. The basic text of this trend is accordingly entitled *rNa brgyud rdo rje zam pa* and is reputed to be a work of Vairocana. It is a very short text in only twenty-two lines and is considered to contain the essential doctrines of the Klong sde tantras.[11] The teaching was passed down through a line of mostly unknown personages finally reaching the famous ascetic, 'Dzeng Dharmabodhi (b.1052) who lived, it is said, for one hundred and seventeen years.[12] However, it was his disciple, the master Kun-bzang rdo-rje

[8] Cf. *SM* pp. 290–494.
[9] Cf. p. 125.
[10] See *rGyal ba drug pa'i lan*, f. 351.
[11] *Ngagyur nyingmay sungrab Series*, Vol. 18(na), 1969, p. 4.
[12] On this master, see *ibid.*, pp. 549–560; *BA* pp. 175–191.

who actually codified all the teachings pertaining to the *rDo rje zam pa* and wrote two extensive works on the teaching and its history.[13] This author seems to be very fond of narrating a long story in which he tells that Śrīsiṃha asked 'Jam-dpal bshes-gnyen to give him instructions in the doctrine of the "instant realisation of the truth" (*chos nyid kyi don skad gcig ma gcig gis rtogs pa*, the word *cig car* is not used here).[14] However, this conception itself is neither discernible in the tantras belonging to this trend nor is it expounded in the *rDo rje zam pa* which is in its contents entirely tantric. After Kun-bzang rdo-rje, little is known of this trend and it seems to have declined along with the Sems sde. As the philosophical standpoint of the Klong sde is practically the same as that of the Sems sde, Klong-chen rab-'byams was content to devote only one work, *Chos dbyings mdzod*, to both trends.

## III. Man ngag gi sde

It was this trend of the Man ngag gi sde or simply called the "Heart drop" (sNying thig), which became widely practised, especially after the fourteenth century, among the rNying ma pa. Numerous works were written about it and different systems of meditation according to this trend evolved. The trend has persisted till our time even among the Tibetans in exile in India and elsewhere. The *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud*[15] of the Bon-po is philosophically very close to this tradition though the former has a totally independent lineage.

The origin of this trend goes back, it is said, to Vimalamitra who expounded the sNying thig teaching to Myang Ting-nge-'dzin[16] based on the Seventeen Tantras, fundamental texts of the trend.[17] It is said that Myang concealed the books of the tantras in the temple of Zhva in the time of the royal period.

While there is a fair amount of uncertainty about Vimalamitra's historicity and hence his visit to Tibet, Myang, on the other hand, was certainly a Buddhist monk. He belonged to the clan Myang. In the two

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[13] See Bibliography; also *GCh* Vol. 2, pp. 315–319.

[14] *sNyan brgyud rin po che rdo rje zam pa'i gdams ngag gzhung bshad che ba, Ngagyur nyingmai sungrab Series*, Vol. 18, p. 66.

[15] See Bibliography.

[16] *rDzogs pa chen po* (*bi ma*) *snying thig gi lo rgyus chen mo* (from now on *Lo rgyus chen mo*), *Bi ma snying thig, sNying thig ya bzhi*, Vol. 7 (Part III), text No. 1, p. 165. The author's name is not given. It is simply stated "by me" (*bdag gis*) in an obscure passage where it is a question of the master lCe-sgom nag-po (p. 177). It is therefore almost certain that he is Zhang-ston bKra-shis rdo-rje (1097–1167), On him, see below, p. 211.

[17] *Tshig don mdzod*, f. 3a1; For the list of the texts, see *Grub mtha' mdzod*, ff. 179b5; 200b3–204a1; Kaneko Nos. 143–159.

inscriptions (*rdo rings*)[18] found near the Zhva temple in dBu-ru, his name occurs with the title *ban de* consistently. It is stated that he was not on good terms with King Khri Srong-lde-btsan and the elder brother of Khri lDe-srong-btsan, but was a tutor to or a guardian of the young prince lDe-srong-btsan. He later became a minister when the young prince succeeded to the throne around 800 A.D. The new king later gave him a landed property where he built a temple (*gtsug lag khang*). The king then had the two inscriptions erected in the vicinity of the temple recording the monk's devoted service to the king and the rewards bestowed on him and his family. The monk is depicted as affectionate, loyal, and an able minister.

The name "Temple of the Hat" (Zhva'i lha-khang) is not mentioned in the inscriptions nor is any other name given. It is therefore of late origin and usually associated with a story of the protective deity rDo-rje legs-pa (Vajrasādhu) who, it is said, helped Myang when he began to build the temple by continuously filling a hat with barley grains.[19] The temple was in bad condition in the fourteenth century and was subsequently restored by Klong-chen rab-'byams of whom we shall have a few more words to say below.

The rNying ma pa tradition maintains that after a long period following the departure of Vimalamitra for China from Tibet, Myang finally gave the exposition of the Seventeen Tantras to 'Brom Rin-chen-'bar,[20] but he hid away the books of the tantras in the temple.

However, it is hard to prove that Myang was a disciple of Vimalamitra and still less that he hid the texts. Nevertheless, what is certain is that the rNying thig trend first took shape in the temple of Myang, and this took place more than two centuries later than the alleged concealment. Towards the end of the eleventh century, the monk lDang-ma lHun-rgyal, living in the temple as a caretaker found, it is said, the hidden texts by Myang and he eventually showed them to lCe-btsun Seng-ge dbang-phyug who then reorganised the rNying thig teaching.[21] According to the critics of rDzogs chen, however, it was lCe-btsun who actually composed the Seventeen Tantras.[22] However that may be, there is a certain amount of credulous stories of his rediscoveries of texts and concealing them again in different places.

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[18] Richardson 1952, pp. 151–54; 1953, pp. 6–7.

[19] *Lo rgyus chen mo*, p. 165; *Zhva padma dbang chen gyi dkar chag gtsigs kyi yi ge zhib mo* by Klong-chen rab-'byams (p. 208).

[20] This personage seems to be identical with 'Bro lHa-bu rin-chen mentioned in *SM* (p. 15) in a similar context.

[21] *Lo rgyus chen mo*, pp. 165–171; on lDang-ma, see *TTGL* pp. 122–25 (R. Prats 1982, pp. 45–52).

[22] *NgD*, p. 280.

The teaching eventually reached Zhang-ston bKra-shis rdo-rje (1097–1167). His *Lo rgyus chen mo* is a detailed account of the tradition, punctuated with chronological information, counting from the date of the Nirvāṇa of the Buddha. It is the earliest work recording how the teaching of rNying thig was transmitted from dGa'-rab rdo-je to Vimalamitra and up to himself. It became the source for many of the later works on the history of the rNying thig trend.[23]

The greatest master of the rDzogs chen tradition after Zhang is, of course, Klong-chen rab-'byams. He is the codifier of the general rDzogs chen philosophy. It was in this connection that he wrote *gNas lugs mdzod* in an attempt to bring together the various philosophical views within the rDzogs chen tradition. However, he is particularly regarded as the great master of the rNying thig trend. It was, in fact, he who established it as a coherent and sound doctrine through the writing of the *Theg mchog mdzod*, his magisterial work. It is devoted to the exposition of the Seventeen Tantras and their one hundred and nineteen minor precepts. *Tshig don mdzod*, a lesser work, but more to the point, is written to further elucidate certain points in the preceding work. Among his other exegetical work, *Bla ma yang tig*[24] is also intended to reveal the contents of the *Vima snying tig*, a collection of five texts attributed to Vimalamitra and rediscovered by lCe-btsun in mChims-phu.[25]

The fourteenth century saw the greatest and most prodigious writers of Tibet, like Bu-ston or Dol-bu-pa. Klong-chen rab-'byams was another one. He wrote not only of religion and philosophy, but also of other subjects such as Sanskrit grammar and poetry.

He was born in Gra in g.Yo-ru, central Tibet in 1308. At an early age he attended various monasteries regarded as centres for learning, for example, gSang-phu, a bKa' gdams pa monastery. Unlike most of other rNying ma pa masters of the period, he tirelessly pursued all Buddhist learning available in his time and wherever it was. At the age of twenty-nine, 1336, he met for the first time Rig-'dzin Kumarārāja (1266–1343), his future rDzogs chen teacher (this master listened to the exposition of various rDzogs chen texts including the *Lung drug*,[26] one of the most important

[23] On Zhang-ston, see *Bi ma snying thig*, Vol. 7, Part III, text No. 5; *BA* p. 193, also Cf. n. 16.

[24] This is one of the collection known as *sNying thig ya bzhi*. The others are: *Bi ma snying tig, mKha' 'gro snying tig* (a group of texts rediscovered by Padma las-'brel-rtsal) and *mKha' 'gro yang tig*, (rearrangement of *mKha' 'gro snying tig* by Klong-chen rab-'byams).

[25] *Grub mtha' mdzod*, f. 202a. These five texts make up four volumes known as *Zab pa pod bzhi*. According to the critics of rDzogs chen, they are in fact written by lCe-btsun, *NgD* p. 280.

[26] Karmay 1977, No. 54,6.

Bonpo rDzogs chen texts from a Slob-dpon Bon-ston). It was after this meeting and receiving instructions from him in the doctrine that he began to write of rDzogs chen what later came to be considered as the most perspicuous and revelatory works that have ever been produced among the rNying ma pa. So numerous were his works that his followers, it seems, have never been able to make a proper and complete inventory or collect them together as was the case with the works of his contemporaries. He had eleven names which he used in different colophons causing much confusion among his later followers.[27] He was a truly eminent hermit in his forties, his favourite hermitage being Gangs-ri thod-dkar of which he wrote a eulogy and it was here that he wrote most of his celebrated works on rDzogs chen.

During this period, in 1349 he undertook the restoration of the dilapidated Zhva'i lha-khang. His son, Chos-grags bzang-po, reports that his father took great care to re-erect the two inscriptions as they were fallen on the ground. One of them, Chos-grags bzang-po specifies, was slightly damaged.[28] Although Klong-chen rab-'byams himself does not state how many inscriptions there were in his record of the restoration, it is interesting enough to note that he uses certain phrases from them in it and its title, *gTsigs kyi yi ge zhib mo*[29] is obviously in the style of the language of the royal period.

Kong-chen rab-'byams was also a noted poet of the *kāvya* style as well as a *gter ston*. It is said that he took out the skull of Śāntarakṣita from the sitūpa which contained the remains of the latter and which was on mount Has-po.[30] In his later years, however, he was known to be a notorious monk as he had at least three children by different ladies. Furthermore, he became quite unjustly the victim of the political intrigue between Tai Situ Byang-chub rgyal-mtshan (1302–1364) who was then rising to power as the ruler of Tibet and the 'Bri-gung principality, then the latter's political opponent. Klong-chen rab-'byams was regarded as the spiritual master of 'Bri-gung which consequently incurred the aversion of the assumed ruler of the country. He miraculously escaped when murderous

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[27] Here are his other names: Klong-gsal dri-med, rDo-rje gzi-brjid, rDo-rje sems-dpa', Dri-med 'od-zer, Blo-gros mchog-ldan, Tshul-khrims blo-gros, Ngag-gi dbang-po, Padma las-grol, sNa-tshogs rang-grol, bSam-yas-pa (*Grub mtha' mdzod*, f. 204b1).

[28] *mThong ba don ldan*, p. 35. It is reported that during the Chinese Cultural Revolution, one of the inscriptions was broken into three pieces.

[29] *Zhva padma dbang chen gyi dkar chag gtsigs kyi yi ge zhib mo*, p. 205; see also the interesting account of the temple by 'Jigs-med gling-pa, *dBu ru zhva lha khang gi gtam chos 'byung me tog, Collected Works*, Vol. IV, *gTam tshogs*, pp. 232–41. The temple contains among other things an image of Myang Ting-nge-'dzin, Situ Chos-kyi rgya-mtsho (1880–1922), *Gangs ljongs dbus gtsang gnas bskor lam yig nor bu zla shel gyi se mo do*, Palampur 1972, p. 63.

[30] Sog-zlog-pa, *Yid kyi mun sel*, f. 97b.

soldiers surrounded his dwelling place.[31] He subsequently fled Central Tibet and exiled himself at Bum-thang in modern Bhutan around 1354. After living there for a while, he eventually returned to Central Tibet and was happily reconciled with the ruler through the mediation of Sangs-rgyas dpal-rin,[32] a disciple of his and a friend of the ruler. Shortly after this, however, he died at mChims-phu at the age of fifty-six only in 1363.

After Klong-chen rab-'byams's departure, sNying thig was further developed into various systems. With the *Klong chen snying thig* of 'Jigs-med gling-pa (1730–1798), the sNying thig doctrine was, however, no longer like the philosophy of the serene contemplator of the Sems sde or the profound meditation of the calm ascetic of the Klong sde, but rather came to be pervaded with a type of *sādhana*, hence very ritualistic.

We have briefly discussed rDzogs chen thought in relation to general Buddhist doctrines,[33] but have not so far touched upon particular doctrines within the rDzogs chen tradition itself. In fact, there is very little that distinguishes one from another, particularly the Sems sde and Klong sde. The central problem in these two trends is the "mind" (*sems*). Apart from the *sems*, nothing else actually exists and the *sems* itself is the Primordial Basis from which the illusory world is created. This ontological status has two different aspects, phenomenal (*sems*) and noumenal (*ye shes*). These two are further related to the theories of *ālaya* and *dharmakāya* respectively. This doctrine as was discussed earlier is very close to that of Vijñānavāda, but does not admit the latter as being the source of its inspiration.[34] In these two trends, there is no particular soteriological development.

The sNying thig, on the other hand, lay a strong emphasis on the Primeval Purity (*ka dag*). It is taken to be the goal so to speak for the adepts, but at the same time it does not admit having any set goal at all, because one is already at the state of Buddha if only one realises it. There are two ways for reaching this goal. If the adept is uncommonly intelligent, but less diligent, the recommended precept for him is the "Cutting off the rigidity" (*khregs chod*), i.e. the wearing down of the bodily elements. When his body is extinguished, he is at the same time released back to the Primeval Purity. This process, which does not allow him to have a "Rainbow Body", is described as "simultaneous" (*cig car*), because he returns to the Primeval Purity and his bodily matter disappears simultaneously. On the other hand, if the adept is less intelligent, but more diligent the

[31] *mThong ba don ldan*, p. 39; due to the indiscretion of his prophecies, O-rgyan gling-pa is also said to have suffered a similar fate (*TTGL* pp. 175–76).
[32] *BA* p. 202; *NGT* Vol. 1, f. 271a.
[33] See p. 175. et seq.
[34] Cf. p. 180.

precept for him is the "Passing beyond the crest" (*thod rgal*).[35] With this, the adept returns to the Primeval Purity in a first stage and then achieves the "Rainbow Body" ultimately. This path is therefore called "gradual" (*rim gyis*), his achievement is regarded as superior to the preceding one.[36] This soteriological theme is much more developed in sNying thig than in the other two trends where the theoretical basis is allowed to suffice. The adept of sNying thig in general endeavours through the *khregs chod* and *thod rgal* precepts to attain the state of what one calls the "Total extinction of the conceptual mind and the exhaustion of the soteriological precepts" (*blo zad chos zad*),[37] thus returning to the Primeval Purity where he was himself at one time at the very beginning.

G. Tucci states that the rNying ma pa present their doctrines in three groups: Sems sde, originates in the Mahāyoga tantras; Klong sde is taught in Anuyoga tantras which lead to the exercises of *khregs chod*, and Man ngag gi sde which is the essence of rDzogs chen is taught in Atiyoga tantras leading to the exercises of *thod rgal*.[38]

No source for this interesting, but rather misleading, information is given. It is true, however, that the term *rdzogs chen* as we have shown elsewhere, is used in *MTPh* to designate a particular level of meditation and *MTPh* is considered to be a supplementary work elucidating certain teaching expounded in *SNy*. The term *rdzogs chen* is therefore directly connected with Mahāyoga tantras. One must, however, make a distinction between the use of the mere term *rdzogs chen* which, as we have seen, covers a variety of teachings and which originally stems from the teaching contained in *MTPh*,[39] and the actual teaching of the Sems sde type, e.g. that of the *Rig pa'i khu byug*. As we have indicated, the Sems sde type of teaching is in fact very close to the doctrine of the Vijñānavāda. The teachings of the Klong sde, moreover, have little to do with the Anuyoga tantras, for example, the *dGongs 'dus*.[40] Neither is the precept *khregs chod* attested in the Anuyoga tantras. It is not even attested in the tantras belonging to the Klong sde type. Both *khregs chod* and *thod rgal*, on the other hand, form an important part of the teachings in the tantras belonging to the category of the Man ngag gi sde.[41] More-

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[35] Cf. p. 193. The term *thod rgal*, unlike *khregs chod*, is in fact a translation of Sanskrit *vyutkrāntaka* or *viṣkandaka*; for a detailed study of this term and references see J. May, *Hobogirin*, Tokyo, 1967, pp. 353–360.

[36] For further details concerning the two precepts, see *Theg mchog mdzod*, Vol. II, ff. 104b6–138b5, 138b5–160a3; *Tshig don mdzod*, f. 121a5 et seq.

[37] Cf. *Theg mchog mdzod*, Vol. I, f. 188a3; *BNy* pp. 265, 266; Lungdol Ngag-dbang blo-bzang (1719–1805), *Bod gangs can gyi lta ba'i grub mtha' rags rim*, p. 437.

[38] *Les religions du Tibet*, 1973, p. 125.

[39] See p. 156 et seq.

[40] Kaneko No. 160.

[41] E.g. *rDzogs pa rang byung*, the first of the Seventeen Tantras of the Man ngag gi sde. Kaneko No. 143; *Tshig don mdzod* f. 121a6.

over, all the three trends are generally considered to belong to the category of tantras known as Atiyoga. Therefore, there is no question of Man ngag gi sde being a supreme teaching originating only in Atiyoga.[42]

The sNying thig doctrine is thought by certain authors to have been based on the Madhyamaka philosophy. G.N. Roerich informs us that the Madhyamaka doctrine is the philosophical background of the sNying thig.[43] It is true that in explicating the terms and ideas of *khregs chod*, Klong-chen rab-'byams interprets certain points in a language that reflects the Madhayamaka philosophy. In describing the Primeval Purity, he uses terms such as "that which appears is devoid of substantiality" (*snang la bden pas stong pa*).[44] However, Klong-chen rab-'byams states that there are parallel ideas (*cha tsam mtshungs pa*) in both systems. He cites the *sems* as an example which in Madhyamaka, according to him, is the vehicle for attaining Buddhahood and that in Madhayamaka one makes the distinction between the *sems* and *sems nyid* just as in the sNying thig system.[45] He therefore does not hold the Madhyamaka philosophy as the basic doctrine on which that of sNying thig is built. The philosophies of rDzogs chen and Madhyamaka are in fact diametrically opposed to each other. While rDzogs chen holds its ontological principle, the Primeval Purity, as a positive reality, the Madhayamaka, on the other hand, negates the existence of any such contingent entity. Very rarely are the theories of emptiness (*śūnyatā*) and the non-self-existence (*niḥsvabhāvatā*) evoked in rDzogs chen tantras, if at all.

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[42] For further details of the three trends of the rDzogs chen tradition, see *Grub mtha' mdzod*, f. 167a6 et seq.

[43] *BA* p. 191, n. 1.

[44] *Tshig don mdzod*, f. 121b5.

[45] *Theg mchog mdzod*, Vol. I, f. 313a1.

CHAPTER TEN

# THE RDZOGS CHEN TRADITION AS A LINK BETWEEN THE RNYING MA PA AND THE BONPO

The rNying ma pa and the Bonpo have a similar historical background. Both trace their origins back to the royal period, especially to the eighth century. While the rNying ma pa acclaim Padmasambhava as their principal patriarch, the Bonpo treat Dran-pa nam-mkha' likewise. Both traditions naturally present them as historical masters engaged in propagating their respective doctrines.

They also share the same kind of tradition according to which they had been through a process of concealment and rediscovery of their texts. For the rNying ma pa a great number were concealed in the royal period, because the teaching they contained was not appropriate at the time. For the Bonpo, however, persecution in the same period led to texts having to be hidden so that they would be saved from destruction. But neither of them accept the fact that there was an interruption in Tibetan history after the assassination of Glang Dar-ma 842 A.D., that the Tibetan cultural and religious development took a new turn after this period, and that it was late in the ninth century that they began to reorganise their doctrines and became what now are known as the rNying ma and g-Yung drung Bon.

The Tun-huang documents which we have studied go back to this period, for example, the *Rig pa'i khu byug* and *sBas pa'i rgum chung*. It was during this period, too, that masters like gNyan dPal-dbyangs composed short treatises and that the term *rdzogs chen* began to be used to designate what one can describe as the fusion of certain elements of the Cig car ba tradition, the Sems sde type teachings and predominantly tantric doctrines expounded in tantras such as *SNy*.

Although the *sBas pa'i rgum chung* is not present as an independent work among the texts collected in *NyG*, it is in fact the "prototype" of the Sems sde texts, such as *KG* and the *gSer gyi rus sbal* of the *bsGrags pa skor gsum* of Bon. From the eleventh century both the rNying ma pa and the Bonpo already possessed a number of works that were specifically regarded as rDzogs chen texts. Moreover, both traditions then began to have *gter ston* who "rediscovered" texts and who were either Buddhist or Bonpo or both. The inter-exchange of texts between *gter ston* of both traditions was common and this practice was continued throughout the centuries.

rDo-rje gling-pa (1346–1405) is the embodiment of this eclectic tradition. Besides this, he occupies a special place in the development of the

rDzogs chen thought in general. While Klong-chen rab-'byams's scholastic approach was aiming at re-structuring and organising the rDzogs chen philosophy, rDo-rje gling-pa was still producing new materials which gave a further dimension to the doctrine. The *lTa ba klong yangs* is perhaps the best example among the "rediscoveries".

He fervently believed that he himself was a rebirth of Vairocana. It was because of this belief that he became interested in Bon at quite an early age. He had his own way of telling the life story of Vairocana. He considers that Vairocana was formerly Yid-kyi khye'u-chung, the disciple of gShen-rab mi-bo and later Ānanda with Śākyamuni. He writes that in the time of Khri Srong-lde-btsan, Vairocana was first a follower of Bon and was called g.Yung-drung gtsug-lag, but he was taught Sanskrit and later sent to India to look for the Atiyoga doctrine. When he returned to Tibet, he was banished to Tsha-ba-rong by the Bonpo ministers, because he practised Buddhism. Padmasambhava sent him a message telling him to propagate Bon in Tsha-ba-rong. That is why when he returned to bSam-yas he worked so much for the sake of the Bon doctrine. He paid a visit to 'Ol-mo lung-ring and there he met Ta-pi hri-tsa and Dran-pa nam-mkha' from both of whom he received countless teachings. When the persecution of Bon took place Vairocana joined the Bonpo in concealing texts in various places and it was during this time that Vairocana and some other Bonpo priests went to Pa-gro stag-tshang (Paro, Bhutan) to conceal the *gSer thur* collection of the Bonpo rDzogs chen texts. When Vairocana was just about to conceal the texts, Dran-pa nam-mkha' appeared in his vision and gave instruction in the doctrine contained in the *gSer thur*. At this time, Dran-pa nam-mkha' prophesied: "in the future there will be one called Bon-zhig who is your own emanation and who will take out the *gSer thur* from its hidden place."[1]

It is against this background that rDo-rje gling-pa began to produce works on Bonpo rDzogs chen. He was at g.Yer-stod chu bo ri when he had signs in a dream in the year earth-bird (1369). He soon set out on his journey. In the year iron-dog (1370) when he was twenty-five he "rediscovered" the *gSer thur* at Pa-gro. He then left Pa-gro and went to sKu-'bum near bSam-gling, the place of Bla-ma 'Dul-ba Rin-po-che where in the year iron-pig (1371), he wrote it down in Tibetan (*phab pa*) as the manuscript (*shog ser*) was in different languages.[2]

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[1] *rDzogs chen gser gyi thur ma ('i) lo rgyus spyi ching chen po go ba 'byed pa'i lde mig* (from now on referred to as *gSer thur lo rgyus*), ff. 13–26.

[2] *rDzogs chen gser thur rmi lam lung bstan*, ff. 420–29. Bla-ma 'Dul-ba Rin-po-che is probably Bru 'Dul-ba rgyal-mtshan (1239–1293) of the monastery of g.Yas-ru dBen-sakha. He lived for some time in Bum-thang(Bhutan), *A-tri thun-tsham cho-na dang cha-lag*, Delhi 1967, *rTogs ldan nyams rgyud kyi rnam thar rin chen phreng ba* (from now on referred to

The volume of the *gSer thur* contains a number of short texts, the principal one being the *gSer thur theg pa'i rtse mo* with twenty-four chapters. Although it is composed within the framework of the Bonpo tradition, there is nothing particularly Bonpo about it doctrinally. The supreme Buddha who preaches is Kun-tu bzang-po as in all rDzogs chen tantras. One of the attendants who listens to the exposition is Rig-pa'i khye'u-chung, i.e. Yid-kyi khye'u-chung and it is Dran-pa nam-mkha' who has the role of requesting the supreme Buddha to preach. This function of Dran-pa nam-mkha' is new, because no Bonpo rDzogs chen works give him this role (f. 120).

In the colophon of the "rediscovery" (*gter byang*) he has used both the names rDo-rje gling-pa and his Bonpo name Bon-zhig gling-pa (ff. 181–82). The *gSer thur* is in fact a kind of abridged version of his other major Buddhist work, the *lTa ba klong yangs*, except that it is composed to suit the Bonpo. It seems to have had immediate impact, for he was soon asked to give an exposition of the work to a group of eighty-seven Bonpo monks and hermits when he was residing at the hermitage of mKhar-sna. He relates that "when his discourse was ended, a feast was organised and the great Bla-ma Nyi-ma of the Bru family asked him to sing a song during the feast introducing the new teaching".[3] He composed a very interesting mystical song. The hermitage of mKhar-sna was an important place for the Bonpo, because a number of Bonpo masters resided there at one time or another and it belonged to the old Bonpo monastery called g.Yas-ru dBen-sa-kha situated on the east bank of the Brahmaputra near mount sMan-ri.[4] The Bru family, whose seat was in the same place, was the patron of the monastery and rDo-rje gling-pa seemed to have developed a particular friendship with this holy Bonpo family who had produced a number of Bonpo scholars and meditators,[5] but the family was exhausted and eventually disappeared after giving birth to two Panchen Lamas of bKra-shis lhun-po.[6]

Bru bSod-nams blo-gros (1337–1401) who was then the abbot of the monastery also received the *gSer thur* teaching from rDo-rje gling-pa. At the end of a mystical song which rDo-rje gling-pa obviously composed in

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as *rNam thar rin chen phreng ba*), p. 38 (Kvaerne 1973, Part I, p. 47; Karmay 1977, No. 60,2). On sKu-'bum and the descendants of rDo-rje gling-pa, see M. Aris, *Bhutan, The early history of a Himalayan Kingdom*, Warminster, England, pp. 151–158.

[3] *Nyon mongs dug lnga 'joms pa thar ba'i rgyun lam, rDo rje gling pa'i bka' 'bum*, Vol. IV, f. 234. The Bla-ma Nyi-ma of Bru is unknown. He is not one and the same as Bru-ston Nyi-ma rgyal-mtshan who seems to be too early for rDo-rje gling-pa to meet, see *rNam thar rin chen phreng ba*, pp. 27–29.

[4] *Legs bshad mdzod* (Karmay 1972, p. 139, n. 1).

[5] *rNam thar rin chen phreng ba*, pp. 35–50 (Kvaerne 1973, Part I, p. 41).

[6] Karmay 1975, p. 184.

the monastery, he writes: "I sang this song of the 'Nine Ways of Bon (*bon theg pa rim dgu*)' at Ba-gor dBen-sa-kha when Rin-po-che bSod-blo (bSod-nams blo-gros) sang his song of the *Bon theg pa rim dgu*."[7]

Kun-grol grags-pa (b.1700) followed by Kong-sprul maintained that rDo-rje gling-pa and Bon-zhig g.Yung-drung gling-pa were one and the same person. I have had doubts about this identification because of the dates given in the Bonpo chronology. It is stated that Bon-zhig g.Yung-drung glin-pa "rediscovered" the *gSer thur* in the year iron-dog (1250) which is therefore too early by two sexagenarian cycles.[8] However, in the light of the publications of the *gSer thur* itself and other works by rDo-rje gling-pa, it is now definite that the identification made by the Bonpo and rNying ma pa historians is correct, but the date 1250 given in the chronology must therefore be corrected to 1370.[9]

Besides this friendly and coreligionist atmosphere as far as their common interest in rDzogs chen went, other underhand and less honourable dealings between the two are unfortunately not unknown. This is typified by the transformation of a Bonpo text into a Buddhist one or vice-versa. In such cases, it required no great skill. The method consisted in creating a Sanskrit title so that it would give the impression of being of Indic origin and in the text itself the proper names had to be changed as well as terms like *bon* for *chos* or *g.yung drung* for *rdo rje*. In the colophon, the name of the person who concealed the text and that of the *gter ston* also had to be appropriately replaced by other names. Consequently for our research purposes this kind of plagiarism is extremely interesting if the disguise can be penetrated, for it shows not only that both the rNying ma pa and Bonpo traditions share the doctrine without having contradictions at least at the philosophical level, but also a common source as far as the rDzogs chen tradition is concerned. The critics of rDzogs chen have therefore reason to suspect the preponderance of non-Buddhist teachings in the rDzogs chen of the rNying ma pa, especially of Bon teachings however vehemently denied by certain rNying ma pa.[10]

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[7] However, in the *rNam thar rin chen phreng ba*, gTer-ston g.Yung-drung gling-pa is mentioned (p. 43) in connection with Bru bSod-nams rgyal-mtshan (1268–1321), but not in the life story of Bru bSod-nams blo-gros. Yet it is the latter who is mentioned in *Nyon mongs dug lnga 'joms pa thar ba'i rgyun lam*, p. 237.

[8] Nyi-ma bstan-'dzin (b.1813), *Sangs rgyas kyi bstan rtsis ngo mtshar nor bu'i phreng ba* (Kvaerne 1971, No. 109).

[9] The dates of this *gter-ston* have been uncertain. However, according to *Nyon mongs dug lnga 'joms pa thar pa'i rgyun lam* (p. 34), rDo-rje gling-pa was requested to perform a rite by Mi-dbang Grags-pa rgyal-mtshan (1374–1432) and he is also said to have imparted certain teachings to the IVth Karma-pa Rang-byung rdo-rje (1340–1399) in *TTGL* (p. 213). The other major "rediscovery" of Bon texts is the collection of *Tshe dbang bod yul ma*. The date of this "rediscovery" should therefore be either 1375 or 1399. Cf. Kvarne 1971, No. 114; Karmay 1977, pp. 83–84.

[10] *LB* pp. 80, 88.

In order to demonstrate the fact of an entire text being borrowed from another, and both traditions having a common source for their cherished rDzogs chen, let us consider first the *rGyud kyi rgyal po gser gyi rus sbal rdo rje theg pa rtsa ba'i rgyud* (Kaneko No. 18; *Bairo rgyud 'bum*, Vol. 4, No. 5) as it illustrates it well. It is regarded by the rNying ma pa as belonging to the Sems sde trend. According to the colophon, it was obviously meant to have been translated from Sanskrit by 'Jam-dpal bshes-gnyen and Vairocana. Later it is said that it was "rediscovered" in Lho-brag by a Khyung-grags, but without mention of where in Lho btag or of who concealed the text or when. The identification of this obscure *gter ston* is at present very uncertain.[11] His name is entirely absent even in *TTGL* and this is odd enough to start with. However, the Vth Dalai Lama gives the full name as Guru Ye-shes khyung-grags and adds another name of a *gter ston*, sBa Śrīratna. He further states that "the text was rediscovered by both the *gter ston* in Lho-brag Kho-mthing",[12] i.e. the temple of Kho-mthing which is in Lho-brag. Nothing is known of the second *gter ston* whom the Vth Dalai Lama has added and who is in fact not even mentioned in the colophon of the copy in the new Thimphu edition of *NyG*.[13]

As for the *gter ston* Guru Ye-shes Khyung-grags, a story has it that he "rediscovered" what is known as the "water of longevity" (*tshe chu*)[14] and gave it to Kublai Khan (Se-chen rgyal-po) who then could live till he was eighty-four. Even though one cannot rely on the credibility of such a story, it nevertheless suggests that Ye-shes khyung-grags lived in or around the thirteenth century.[15]

Now, the parallel Bonpo text is to be found in the collection of the *bsGrags pa skor gsum* in which it figures as the first and one of the principal texts. This Bonpo collection is believed to have been "rediscovered" by gZhod-ston dNgos-grub grags-pa also in the same temple of Kho-mthing in Lho-brag. He is said to have made the "rediscovery" in 1100.[16] He therefore would seem to belong to a date much earlier than Guru Y-shes khyung-grags. The Bonpo text is also supposed to be a translation, but no name of the translator is given. Li-mu khod-stong which appears to be the name of the translator's master is mentioned.[17] It begins with a title sup-

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[11] Cf. Blondeau 1984, pp. 112–14.
[12] *GCh* Vol. 4, p. 471.
[13] Cf. Blondeau 1984, pp. 114–15.
[14] For a story of *tshe chu* hidden by Padmasambhava, see *MNy* pp. 407–11.
[15] *Yid kyi mun sel* f. 64a. However, a slightly different story is given in *gTer ston brgya rtsa'i mtshan sdom gsol 'debs chos rgyal bkra shis stobs rgyal gyi mdzad pa'i 'grel ba lo rgyus gter ston chos 'byung* by Karma mi-'gyur dbang-rgyal (Blondeau 1984, pp. 113–14).
[16] Karmay 1977, No. 54.
[17] The colophon of this tantra is carefully studied by A.M. Blondeau who is probably right in suggesting that the name Li-mu khod-stong constitutes the names of three dif-

posed to be in the Zhang-zhung language. It has thirty chapters as in the case of the Buddhist version in *NyG*.

The two texts are absolutely identical except for the proper names and certain terms. Here is a short comparative analysis of certain significant passages from both texts which will show how the transformation is made.

| *bsGrags pa skor gsum*:[18] | *NyG* (Kaneko No. 18): |
|---|---|
| *rGyud kyi rgyal po gser gyi rus sbal g.yung drung thigs pa man ngag rtsa ba'i rgyud/* | *rGyud kyi rgyal po gser gyi rus sbal rdo rje theg pa rtsa ba'i rgyud/* |
| *Chapter I* | |
| p. 4,3<br>*nam mkha' lta bu'i bon sku mtshon bral las/* | f. 598,2<br>. . . . . . . . . . *chos sku* . . . . . . . . |
| p. 4,4<br>*ye sangs yul du shes rab blo rtsal skye/* | f. 598,2<br>*ye sangs gnas su* . . . . . . . . . |
| p. 4,4<br>*'og min lha gnas 'gro 'dul bon lung nos/* | f. 598,3<br>*'og min gnas su* . . . . . *'dus chos.* |
| p. 4,4<br>*phy(v)a'i grong khyer chen por blo yi rtsal rnams sbyangs/* | f. 598,3<br>*sum cu rtsa gsum 'khor rnams kun la bshad/* |
| p. 5,1<br>*'od gsal gnas su shes bya'i sgrib pa sbyangs/* | f. 598,3<br>*'od gsal gnas su blo'i rtsal rnams sbyangs/* |
| p. 5,1<br>*'dul ba'i dus bab par gzigs sgongs (dgongs) thugs la bzhag/* | f. 598,3<br>*'dul ba'i bab pa thugs kyis mkhyen/* |
| p. 5,3<br>*bon sgo brgyad khri bzhi stong phye de bstan/* | f. 598,5<br>*chos sgo* . . . . . . . . . . |
| p. 6,5<br>*gab pa yang gter mdo yi(s) phye de bstan/* | f. 599,4<br>*a ti yo ga'i* . . . . . . . . . . |

This chapter requires some comments. In the legend of gShen-rab mi-bo, gSal-ba, who is in Ye-sangs, makes a decision to descend to earth in order to help living beings, and then goes to 'Og-min to ask for permission from gShen-lha 'od-dkar who resides there. He then studies in the city of the Phyva gods and eventually goes to Bar-lha 'od-gsal where he purifies

ferent personages: Li-sha, Mu-khod and sTong-rgyung mthu-chen (1984, p. 112, n. 117).

18 *rDzogs chen bsgrags pa skor gsum* (Karmay 1977, No. 54,2).

himself before descending to earth in order to take birth as gShen-rab. These four places are known as *gNas rigs chen po bzhi*, but one also finds different versions of the names of these places.[19] No similar story in connection with Dam-pa tog-dkar who is the parallel of gSal-ba in the Buddhist legend is attested.

The other feature in this chapter, which is even more curious, is the list of the twelve short treatises, known as *rGyud bu chung bcu gnyis*. They are a part of the *bsGrags pa skor gsum* collection and so can be found in the same volume,[20] but there is certainly no Buddhist version of them among the works in *NyG*.

*Chapter II*

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|---|---|
| p. 8,3–4 | f. 601,1 |
| *yab 'phrul gshen snang ldan dang/*<br>*yum bzang za ring btsun dang/*<br>*sras 'chi med gtsug phud dang/*<br>*'khor rnams kyis ston pa la zhus pa/* | *sems dpa' rdo rjes zhus pa/* |
| p. 9,1 | f. 601,5 |
| *g.yung drung bon la rgya che grangs mang yang/* | *chos sgo brgyad khri bzhi stong grangs mang yang/* |
| p. 10,1 | f. 602,4 |
| *bsdus pa'i sgo bzhi spyi dang lnga/* | *bsdus pas sgo bzhi spyi ti yid dang lnga/* |

Here the *sgo bzhi* and the *spyi* refer to the group of the "Four Portals and the mDzod", usually known as *Bon sgo bzhi mdzod lnga*, a Bonpo classification of their doctrines.[21] The existence of this particular classification for Buddhist doctrines does not seem to be attested.

*Chapter III*

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| p. 11,4 | f. 604,2 |
| *des na bon dang gshen rab med/* | *des na chos dang sangs rgyas med/* |

*Chapter IV*

| | |
|---|---|
| p. 13,7 | f. 607,1 |
| *'phen('phan) yul dka' thub sdom pa yis/* | *theg pa 'og ma'i sdom pa yis/* |

Here 'Phan yul is one of the Four Portals of Bon.

*Chapter VII*

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| p. 14,5 | f. 607,7 |
| *chab dkar nag gi phyi nang sngags rnams kyis/* | *sngags phyi nang gis kyang/* |

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[19] Cf. Karmay 1975, pp. 176, 195.
[20] *rDzogs chen bsgrags pa skor gsum* (Karmay 1977, No. 54,4)
[21] Snellgrove 1967, p. 16; Karmay 1975, p. 190.

Here while *Chab dkar* refers to Bonpo tantric teachings, *Chab nag* covers popular rituals. These are two categories in the classification of the "Four Portals". For the sNgags phyi nang of the Buddhists, see p. 165.

*Chapter XVI*

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| p. 22,4 | f. 616,7 |
| *'das pa de don gshen lha dkar po'i thugs/* | *das pa de don sangs rgyas nyid kyi thugs/* |

In the light of this comparative analysis, it is evident beyond any doubt that it was Guru Ye-shes khyung-grags who simply copied out the *gSer gyi rus sbal* of the *bsGrags pa skor gsum* and made some changes in a few places without altering the structure despite the fact that it involved certain contradictions for the rNying ma pa:

1. The story of gShen-rab's former life in four heavens, *viz*. Srid pa ye sangs, Phyva'i grong-khyer, 'Od-gsal or Bar-lha 'od-gsal (the usual name of this heaven is Srid-pa gung-sangs) and 'Og-min hardly fits in, particularly Phyva'i grong-khyer, the city of the Phyva. The last two heavens, however, do have Buddhist parallels.

2. The twelve treatises known as *rGyud bu chung bcu gnyis*, the list of which is given in the *gSer gyi rus sbal*, extant in the *bsGrags pa skor gsum* just after the *gSer gyi rus sbal*, have no Buddhist parallels in *NyG*.

3. The classification of the Bon doctrines into five categories known as *Bon sgo bzhi mdzod lnga* has not equivalent in the rNying ma pa tradition.

## Common Source

However, the rNying ma pa and the Bonpo have a common source for the rDzogs chen tradition, particularly for the Sems sde type teachings. The *sBas pa'i rgum chung* is a good example of this. Although the *gSer gyi rus sbal* was presumably compiled by gZhod-ston dNgos-grub grags-pa, it is nevertheless in turn philosophically based on Buddhist texts such as the *sBas pa'i rgum chung* or other similar works. The following lines of the *gSer gyi rus sbal* are simple reproductions taken out of the *sBas pa'i rgum chung* in order to explain the philosophical view of meditation:

*mi rtog zab mo nyams myongs na/*
*myong ba nyid kyi bsgom chags nad/* (p. 21,7)

*ji tsam mo yi(zab mo) tshig brjod pas/*
*don dang mthun pa yongs mi 'gyur/* (p. 22,7).[22]

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[22] For these, see pp. 71–72. *ll.* 3–4, 7–8.

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# CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

A.D.

*c.* 600 gNam-ri slon-btsan becomes king of Tibet.
*c.* 622 Srong-btsan sgam-po (b.609) succeeds.
Capitures A-zha *c.* 635, receives first Chinese Ambassador, annexes Zhang-zhung 645, marries Nepalese princess, mGar brings the Chinese wife 641, Introduction of Buddhism.
Jo-khang and Ra-mo-che temples founded.
649 Death of Srong-bstan sgam-po. Mang-slon mang-btsan succeeds.
Beginning of warfare between Tibet and China.
676 Khri 'Dus-srong (b.676) succeeds.
Takes possession of Turkestan 666–692 and 'Jang (Nan-chao) 680
704 Khri lDe-gtsug-btsan (b.704) succeeds.
Takes several Chinese towns 720, 727 and 741 and Bru-sha (Gilgit) 737.
Kva-cu temple founded, Buddhism banned *c.* 740
754 Khri Srong-lde-btsan (b.742) succeeds.
Pāla kings begin to pay tribut to Tibet, penetration into Chinese territories: Kansu, Sichuan and Yunnan, etc. 756–61, seizure of the Chinese capital Ch'ang-an 762, beginning of the Chinese annual tribut to Tibet, erection of the Zhol rDo-ring *c.* 767, occupation of Tun-huang 787.
Śāntarakṣita (725–783) invited, *bKa'-mchid* issued *c.* 7761, bSam-yas founded 775(?), ordination of the first seven monks, *bKa'-gtsigs* issued inaugrating Buddhism as the state religion *c.* 779. Vairocana, dBa' Ye-shes dbang-po and dBa' dPal dbyangs active.
Sino-Indian Buddhist controversy in Tibet 792.
797 Mu-ne btsan-po (b.774) succeeds.
*c.* 800 Khri lDe-srong-btsan (Sad-na-legs, b.776) succeeds.
sKar-chung temple founded, Tantric teachings banned, revision of the written Tibetan, compilation of the first catalogue: *lDan-dkar-ma* and the Sanskrit-Tibetan dictionary: *Mahāvyutpatti* *c.* 814.
Myang Ting-nge-'dzin, Vimalamitra, g.Yu-sgra snying-po, sKa-ba dPal-brtsegs, Cog-ro Klu'i rgyal-mtshan and Zhang Ye-shes-sde active.
815 Khri gTsug-lde-btsan (Ral-pa-can, b.805) succeeds.
Sino-Tibetan Peace Treaty signed 821–822, erection of the gTsug-lag-khang rDo-ring.
'U-shang-rdo gTsug-lag-khang and De-ga g.yu-tshal temple founded.
*c.* 836 Glang Dar-ma (b. *c.* 803) succeeds.
Persecution of the Buddhist monastic establishment *c.* 838, Tantric Buddhism prevails.
Beginning of rDzogs chen philosophy.
lHa-lung dPal-gyi rDo-rje, Buddhagupta and gNyan dPal-dbyangs active.
842 Assasination of Glang Dar-ma by a Tibean Buddhist monk and fall of the Tibetan Empire.

### Descendants of the Royal Family

*c.* 880 Khri 'Od-srung (d. *c.* 887) reigns in Central Tibet.
*c.* 887 dPal 'Khor-btsan succeeds *c.* 865.
Civil war breaks out *c.* 929, looting of the royal tombs *c.* 937.
*c.* 980 lHa Bla-ma Ye-shes-'od reigns in Western Tibet.
Reappearance of Buddhist monasticism 978, criticism of Tantrism begins, consolidation of rDzogs chen philosophy.

gNubs Sangs-rgyas ye-shes active.
gShen-chen Klu-dga (996–1035) "rediscovers" the Bonpo rDzogs chen text: *Gab pa dgu bskor c.* 1017.
1042 lHa-btsun Byang-chub-'od invites Atiśa.
Tibetan Buddhism (or Lamaism) begins to develop.
rDzogs chen under criticism.
A-ro Ye-shes 'byung-gnas, Pho-brang Zhi-ba-'od, 'Dzeng Dharmabodhi (b. 1052) and Rong-zom Chos-kyi bzang-po active.
bZhod-ston dNgos-grub grags-pa "rediscovers" the Bonpo rDzogs chen text: *bsGrags-pa skor-gsum c.* 1100. Zhang-ston bKra-shis rdo-rje (1097–1167) and lCe-btsun Seng-ge dbang-phyug "rediscover" texts on *rDzogs chen snying thig* 1117.
Klong-chen rab-'byams (1308–1363) begins to codify rDzogs chen philosophy *c.* 1347.

# GLOSSARY

## I. Sanskrit key-words

*tathāgatagarbha* 87, 179,n.33, 184, 186,n.61
*tathāgatadhyāna* 104
*tīrthika* 121,n.2, 124, 152,n.72, 153, 154, 162, 163, 164, 169
*trīṇivimokṣamukha* 160,n.95
*ḍākiṇī* 29, 98, 192
*dharmakāya* 18, 46, 143, 155,n.82, 156,n.89, 177, 180, 185, 186, 213, 221
*dharmatā* 55, 112, 114,n.42, 154
*dharmadhātu* 116, 156
*dharmadhātuviśuddhi* 71,n.58
*dhātu* 154
*dharaṇi* 5, 52, 54,n.58
*dhyāna* 65, 72,n.70, 75,notes 11, 12, 88,n.13, 93,n.42, 97, 104, 112, 124,n.17
Nirgrantha 188,n.68
*nirmāṇakāya* 155,n.82
*nirvāṇa* 93, 104, 113, 154, 156, 159, 160, 161, 176, 181, 190–97, 104, 211
*niṣprapañca* see *aprapañca*
*niḥsvabhāvatā* 215
*nītārtha* 55, 58
*nītarthasūtra* 95
*neyārtha* 55, 58, 91, 92
*neyārthasūtra* 95
*pañcakrama* 194
*pariniṣpaṇna* 105
*paripūrṇa* 10,n.33
*paryudāsa-pratiṣedha* 50,n.39
*pāramitā* 154
*prakṛti* 153,n.74
*prakṛtisthagotra* 87
*prajñā* 54,n.58, 131, 156,n.88, 160,n.95
*pratyavekṣaṇājñāna* 71,n.61
Pratyekabuddha 154
Pratyekabuddhayāna 153
*prasajya-pratiṣedha* 50,n.39
*prāṇa* 197
Prāsaṅgika 3, 84, 149, 150, 186,n.61
*bodhi* 51, 131, 132, 179
*bodhicitta* 45, 65, 71,n.58, 87, 114,n.40, 117, 118, 128, 129, 130, 131, 156, 157,n.89, 160, 176, 178, 179
*bodhicittotpādasamaya* 45
Bodhisattvayāna 153
*bhāvanakrama* 89
*bhūmi* 161,n.98
Madhyamaka 3, 20, 89, 144, 150, 178, 215
*manojñāna* 156
Mantrayāna 110, 127
*maṇḍala* 50,n.41, 55, 92, 95, 151, 155, 156, 161
*maryada* 152,n.70
*mahātman* 119
Mahāmudrā 142, 144–45, 197–200
Mahāyoga 10, 11, 13, 52,n.45, 61, 63, 66, 68, 69, 86–87, 89, 92, 94,n.45, 96, 97, 107, 121, 122, 138, 142, 143, 147, 151, 156,n.89, 172–73, 191, 192, 193, 214
*mahāsanti* 10,n.33, 138, 141, 143
*mahāsukha* 53, 54,n.55, 56, 57, 58, 71,notes 60, 61, 75,n.4, 117, 119
Mādhyamika 89
Māyājāla 139
*mārā* 161
*mudrā* 155

Mūlasarvāstivāda
*mokṣa* 73,n.83
*yakṣa* 20
*yāna* 146–47
*yugapat* 86,n.2
*yoga* 147, 154, 155
Yogācāra 67, 84, 89, 105,n.120
Yogācāramadhyamaka 3, 4
*rūpakāya* 142
*rūpaskandha* 154
*lokāyata* 152,n.70
Vajrayāna 18, 19, 153, 154
*vajraskāndha* 156
Vajrāsana 23
*vāsanā* 179, 180, 182, 183
*vikalpa* 49, 71,n.61, 175
*vijñāna* 156
Vijñānavāda 67, 105, 106, 107,n.4, 178, 179, 180, 181, 187, 189, 213, 214
Vidyādhāra 191–92, 196
Vinaya 2, 6, 7, 46, 123
*vipaśyanā* 104
*viṣkandaka* 214,n.35
Vedānta 188,n.68
Vaibhāṣika 150
*vyutkrāntaka* 214,n.35
*śamatha* 104
*śāśvatavāda* 114,n.40, 152,n.72, 163, 188, 189
*śūnyatā* 160,n.95, 177, 186,n.61, 215
*śaikṣa* 132
Śaiva 152,n.72, 153,n.75
Śrāvaka 2, 154, 162
Srāvakayāna 153
*saṃpannakrama* 55, 71,n.57, 138, 139, 141, 143, 148, 152, 155,n.85, 197
*saṃbhogakāya* 18, 150, 155,n.82, 156,n.89
*saṃsāra* 109, 113, 151, 156, 159, 160, 161, 176, 180, 181, 182, 189, 204
*saṃskṛita* 132
*satyadarśana* 111,n.26
*santi* 47,n.26
*samatājñāna* 71,n.60
*samādhi* 72,n.61, 131, 138, 147, 155
Sāṃkhya 153,n.74, 186,n.61, 188,n.68
*sādhaka* 155
*sādhana* 26, 54,n.58, 213
Singhala 22,n.18
*siddhānta* 137, 152,notes 71, 72
*sugatagarbha* 109, 184–85, 186,n.61
Sumeruśikhara 18
Suvarṇadvīpa 22,n.18
Sūtrayāna 12, 19
*sopadhi-śeṣa-nirvāṇa* 191
*skandha* 154, 156, 160
*svabhāvakāya* 18
*svayambhūjñāna* 114,n.42, 119, 128
*svarga* 73,n.83
*svasaṃvedana* 107,n.4, 148
*homa* 96

## II. Tibetan terms mostly with rare meanings

*ka dag* "primeval purity" 11, 51,n.43, 151, 176, 177, 179, 181–83, 193–94, 213
Kam-cu, a place-name 76, 79, 80
*Kun rdzob tshad grub* "empirical reality of conventional truth" 194
*kun gzhi* = *ālaya* (*q.v.*) "basis of all" 65, 73,n.78, 74, 75, 107,n.4, 178–84, 186, 204
*kun gzhi rnam shes* = *ālayavijñāna* (*q.v.*) "consciousness" 179, 180, 184
*ko mo* pool, puddle 96,n.61
Klong sde, a group of texts and name of a trend in rDzogs chen 29, 208–9, 213, 214
dKar po chig thub, name of a medicinal plant and Mahāmudrā (*q.v.*) 197–200
bKa' brgyud pa, name of a sect 146, 197, 199, 211
*bka' mchid* command, decree 1
*bka' thang* = *bka'i thang yig* record, proceedings 27,n.37, 30
bKa' gdams pa, name of a sect 124, 211
*bka' ma* oral teaching whose transmission has not been interrupted, Cf. *gter ma* 31, 32
*bka' gtsigs* edict 78,n.15, 79,n.19
*bka' shog* official letter, ordinance 12,n.39, 66, 124, 140
*bkas bcad* decree, Cf. *bka' mchid* 5,n.18, 151
bKra-shis lhun-po, monastery 218
*rkang mgyogs* "swift-footed" 25
*rkyen ris* "reserved provision" 7
sKu 'bum, a place-name 217
*bskyud byang* "recollective notes" 163
*bskyed rdzogs* = *bskyed rim* (*q.v.*), *rdzogs rim* (*q.v.*) 50,n.41, 18, 58, 74,n.1
*bskyed rim* = *utpannakrama (q.v.)*

Kha-ra sgo-btsun, a place-name 68
*kha bskang ba* to supplement 31
Khams lugs, a meditational system in rDzogs chen 126,n.27, 156,n.88, 208
*kheng log* revolt 9
Kho-mthing, name of a temple 221
Khyung-po, a place-name 42
*khregs chod* "cutting off the rigidity" 193, 213–14, 215
mKhar-sna, name of a Bonpo hermitage 218
*'khrul snang* illusory appearance 204
*'khrul gzhi* "the genetic state from which one strays" 189, 190

Gangs-ri thod-dkar, name of a hermitage 212
Ga'u ma, a type of Mahāmudrā teaching 144, 145
Gong-cu, a place-name 76, 79, 80
*gol sgrib* "deviation and obscurity" 70,notes 52,54, 119, 130
*gol ba* = gol sa (*q.v.*)
*gol sa* "deviation" 48, 49, 54,n.55, 72,notes 65, 67, 74, 103, 119, 75,n.9
Gra, a place-name 211
Grangs can pa = Sāṃkhya (*q.v.*)
*grub mtha'* = *siddhānta* (*q.v.*)
*grol gzhi* "the basis for releasing oneself" 183, 189
Glong-thang sgrol-ma, a place-name 126,n.27
dGe ldan bka' brgyud = dBen sa snyan brgyud (*q.v.*)
dGe ldan phyag rgya chen po = dBen sa snyan brgyud (*q.v.*)
dGe lugs pa, name of a sect 89, 146, 182, 186,n.61, 194, 196, 197
*dgongs brgyud* "transmission without verbal communication" 44
*rgum* grain 59, 60, 61, 66, 70,n.49, 83, 85
rGyang 'phen pa = Lokāyata (*q.v.*) 152, 162, 163, 169
rGyal ba pa = Jaina (*q.v.*)
rGyal-mo tsha-ba-rong, a place-name 5, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 217

rGyal-mo-rong, a place-name 26,n.31
*sgom yig* texts on meditation 102, 125,n.23
*sgom rim* texts concerned with the teaching of the Rim gyis pa (*q.v.*) 88,n.18, 89, 93,n.42, 199,n.107
*sgom lung* texts concerned with the teaching of the Cig car ba (*q.v.*) 89, 174
*sgyu ma'i sku* "illusory body" 194
*sgyu lus* = *sgyu ma'i sku* (*q.v.*)
sGra bsgyur gling, name of a temple in bSam yas (*q.v.*) 5, 29
*sgrol ba* "ritual slaying" 10, 46, 50,n.42, 54,n.56, 58, 123, 139, 140

*ngan sngags* = *drag sngags* (*q.v.*)
*nges don* = *nītārtha* (*q.v.*)
*ngo bo nyid kyi sku* = *svabhāvakāya* (*q.v.*)
lNga ldan, a type of Mahāmudrā teaching, 144, 145
*snga 'gyur lnga* a group of 5 texts 24
*sngags nang pa* = *rnal 'byor nang pa* (*q.v.*)
sNgags rnying ma, "Old Tantras" 121
*sngags log* false, perverse tantric teachings 123,n.10, 140
sNgags gsar ma "New Tantras" 121, 138, 141, 146, 155,notes 84, 85

*cig car* "simultaneous" 86,n.2, 209, 213
*cig car 'jug pa* "entering simultaneously" 65, 88, 104, 143
Cig car ba, "Simultaneist" 78,n.15, 79,n.19, 86–106, 108, 111, 112,n.27, 116, 120, 142, 143, 198,n.103, 200, 206, 216
*cig char* = *cig car* (*q.v.*)
*gcig grol* "single release", "release through one alone" 49, 189,n.71
*gcig char* = *cig car* (*q.v.*)
*gcig chod* "independent" 49
*gcig thub* "the only one which enables" 49
*gcig shes* "knowing one thing" 198
*gcer grol* "naked release" 108, 189,n.71
gCer bu ba = Nirgrantha (*q.v.*)
gCod yul, name of a teaching 144, 145
bCom-ldan 'das-kyi ring-lugs, title of the Abbot of bSam-yas (*q.v.*) 3, 5, 68, 77
*bcos bslad med pa* "that which is neither altered nor spoiled" 50,n.40

Chad lta ba = *ucchedavāda* (*q.v.*)
Ch'an, name of a Chinese Buddhist school 5, 21, 29, 37, 49, 65, 88,n.13, 90, 93,notes 41, 42, 96, 103–4, 118,n.55, 152,n.71, 206
*chab dkar* a category of Bonpo texts 222–23
*chab nag* a category of Bonpo texts 222–23
*chig thub* "that which is good enough in itself" 198
*che ba lnga* "the Five Great Ones" 25, 59, 64, 71,n.58, 74, 114,n.40, 130
*Chos kyi 'dun sa* "Religious council" 4,n.11, 5, 6
*chos sku* = *dharmakāya* (*q.v.*)
*chos log* false or perverse doctrine 123, 206
mChims-phu a cave in Brag-dmar near bSam-yas (*q.v.*) 30, 34, 213

*ji lta ba bzhin* = *ji bzhin pa* (*q.v.*)
*ji bzhin pa* "suchness" 49, 50,n.40, 53, 56, 57, 71,n.55, 72,n.62, 74,n.1, 75, 84, 118
Jo nang pa, name of a sect 87, 114,n.42, 179, 182, 185, 186, 197
*'ja' lus* "Rainbow body" 124, 187, 190–96
*'jal byed* "cognition" 108
*rjes su mal 'byor* = Anuyoga (*q.v.*)

*nyams myong* experience (mystic) 71,n.60, 75
*nye'u* small fish; criminal 95,n.50
*gnyis med* = *advaya* (*q.v.*)

*gnyug ma'i gzhi lus* = *sgyu ma'i sku* (*q.v.*)
rNying ma pa, name of a sect 13, 17, 24, 32, 34, 36, 41, 46, 60, 62, 63, 79,n.19, 93,n.42, 96, 99, 122, 123, 137, 139, 141, 146, 148, 155,n.82, 156,n.89, 161,n.98, 180,n.34, 188, 195, 196, 206, 212, 214, 216, 219, 220, 223
*snyan brgyud* "oral tradition", Cf. *rna brgyud*
sNying thig, name of a trend in rDzogs chen 209, 211, 213–14, 215
sNye-mo bye-mkhar, a place-name 21

Ton men = sTon men pa (*q.v.*)
*gtan tshigs* reasoning 1, 110
*gter ston* textual discoverer 36, 126,n.26, 216, 219, 220
*gter ma* "rediscovered texts", Cf. *bka' ma* 31, 187, 202
rTag lta ba = *śāśvatavāda* (*q.v.*)
*rtog chen pa* "spy" 27
*rtog pa* see *rnam par rtog pa*
sTod-lung, a place-name 7
sTon men pa = Cig car ba (*q.v.*)
bsTan-rgyas-gling, name of a monastery 31,n.43

*tha tshig* vow, oath; definition 46, 57, 58
Thai 'gyur ba = Prāsaṅgika (*q.v.*)
*thig le chen po* "great circle" 108, 118, 119, 129
*thig le nyag cig* = *thig le chen po* (*q.v.*) 22, 118,n.55
*thig le drug* "the six circles" 25, 118, 130,n.55
*theg pa* means, way 119, 146–48, 149, 163
*theg pa dgu* "the nine vehicles" 137, 146–49, 147, 219
*theg pa rim dgu see theg pa dgu*
*theg pa gcig pa* = *ekayāna* (*q.v.*)
*thod rgal* "passing over the crest" 193, 214
*thog ma'i sangs rgyas* = *ādibuddha* (*q.v.*)
*mtha' grol* "final release" 189,n.71
*mtha' mi* foreigner 29
*mthun pa'i dharma* "harmonious books" 95, 97

*de kho na nyid* = *tathatā* (*q.v.*)
*de bzhin nyid* = *de kho na nyid* (*q.v.*)
*de bzhin gshegs pa'i bsam gtan* = *tathāgatadhyāna* (*q.v.*)
*don gyi dbang* "significance", "implication" 56
*drag sngags* spells 100
*drang srong* = *ṛiṣi* (*q.v.*)
*drang don gyi mdo* = *neyārthasūtra* (*q.v.*)
*drang don* = *neyārtha* (*q.v.*)
Dhahena, a place-name 22, 23, 25, 26, 32
*gdengs* "confidence", "assured expectation" 25,n.25, 130, 144
*gdod nas dag pa* = *ka dag* (*q.v.*)
*gdod ma'i gzhi* "primordial basis" 119, 175
*bdag nyid chen po* "great-self 58, 112, 114, 119
bDud-'dul sngags-pa-gling, name of a temple in bSam-yas (*q.v.*) 4
*bdun brgyud* "seven successions" 20,n.10, 93,n.42
*bde ba chen po* = *mahāsukha* (*q.v.*)
*bde gshegs snying po* = *sugatagarbha* (*q.v.*)
*bden pa mthong ba* "seeing the truth" 71,n.61, 111
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# INDICES

## I. Sanskrit names



## II. Tibetan names

# ILLUSTRATIONS

*1a*

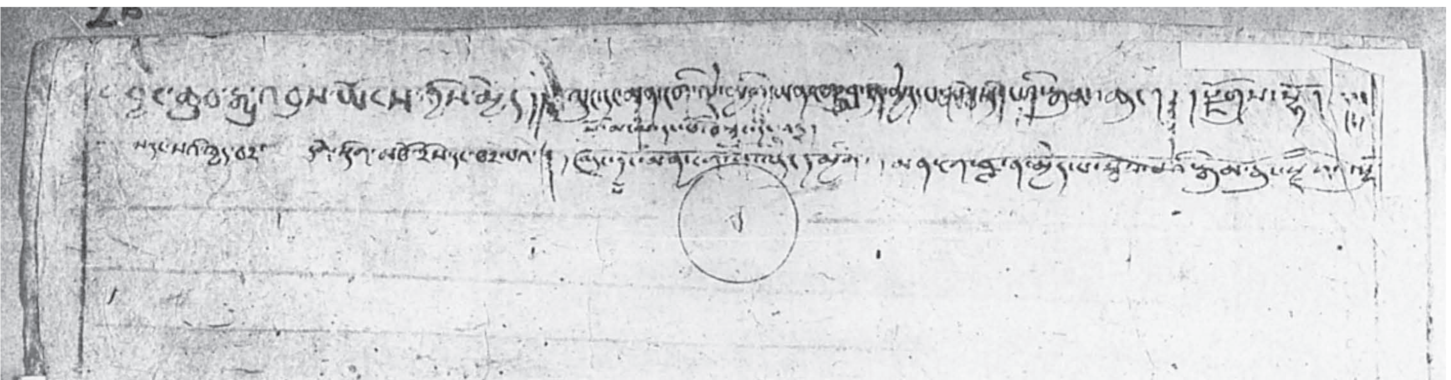
A. IOL 594 (for transliteration, see pp. 74-76)

*1b*

*2a*

B. IOL 594 (for transliteration, see pp. 74-76)

2b



C. IOL 594 (for transliteration, see pp. 74-76)

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D. IOL 647 (for transliteration, see pp. 56-59)

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E. IOL 647 (for transliteration, see pp. 56-59)

*2b*

*3a*

F. IOL 647 (for transliteration, see pp. 56-59)

*3b*

*4a*

G. IOL 647 (for transliteration, see pp. 56-59)

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*5a*

H. IOL 647 (for transliteration, see see pp. 56-59)



1. bSam-yas, Central Tibet
(SGK 1987)



2. rDzogs-chen-khang in bSam-yas (see p. 11)
(SGK 1987)



3. Ba-gor Vairocana, bSam-yas
(SGK 1987)



4. Pho-brang Zhi-ba-'od, sKu-'bum, rGyal-rtse
(SGK 1987)



5. Zhva'i lha-khang (see pp. 209-210, 212)
(SGK 1987)



6. Dol-bu-pa Shes-rab rgyal-mtshan (1292-1361) sKu-'bum, rGyal-rtse
(SGK 1987)



7. Klong-chen rab-'byams (1308-1363), bSam-yas
(SGK 1987)



8. Hermitage Gangs-ri thod-dkar (see p. 212)
(SGK 1987)



9. The Fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682),
the Gold Manuscript of the Fournier Collection



10. 'Jigs-med gling-pa (1728-1791), bSam-yas
(SGK 1987)



11. Kun-grol grags-pa (b. 1700), rNga-khog, Amdo
(SGK 1987)



12. Shar-rdza bKra-shis rgyal-mtshan (1859-1934), rNga-khog, Amdo
(SGK 1987)